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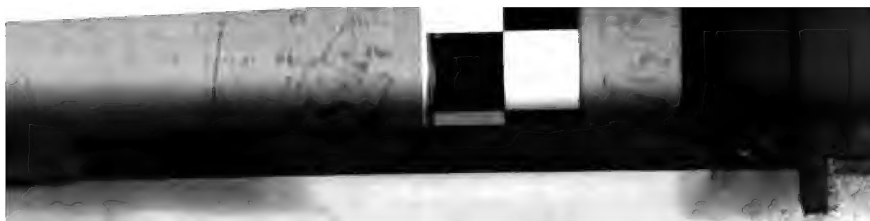
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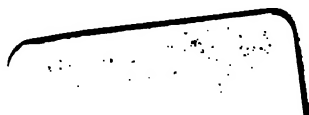
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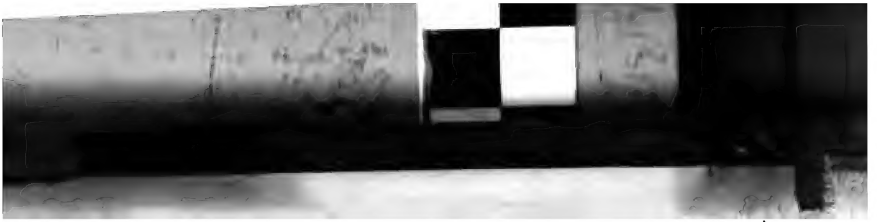
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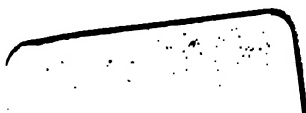
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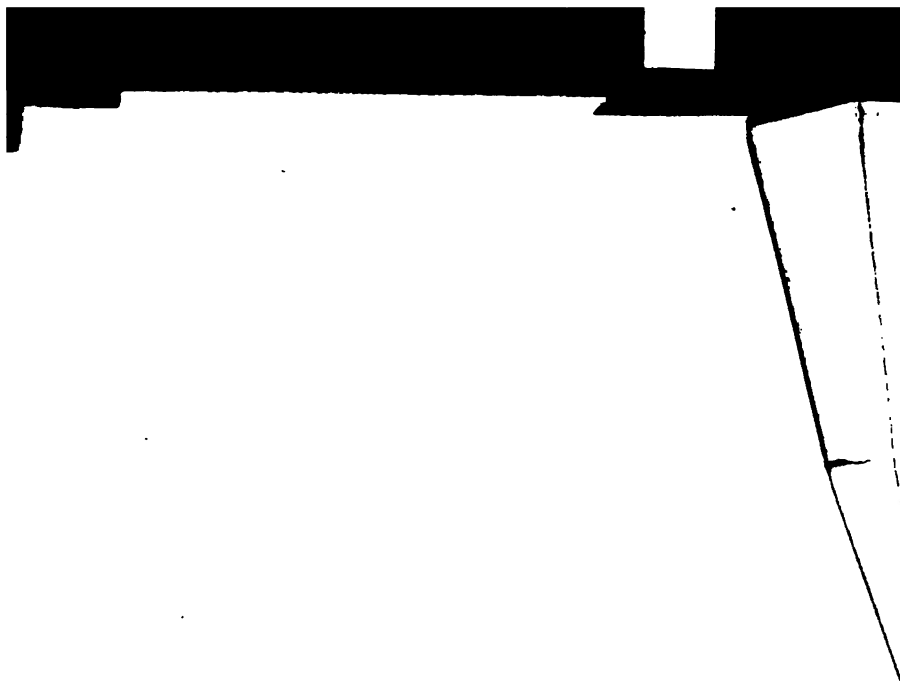






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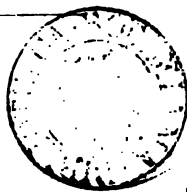




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AUGUST TO NOVEMBER.

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AUGUST, 1863.

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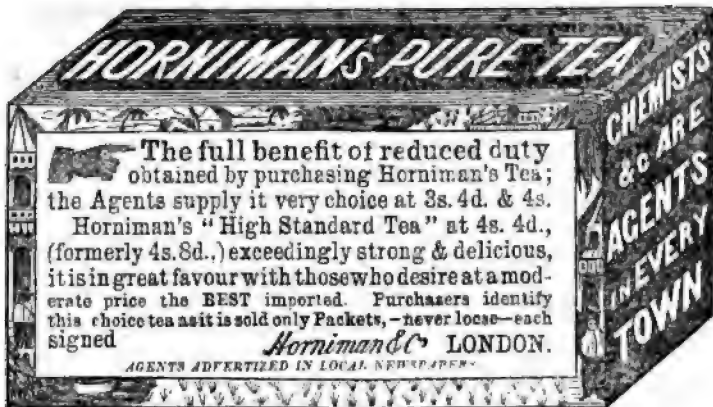
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AUBREY MARSTON;
OR, A GAME OF SPECULATION.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE HEIRESS OF SOMMERLEYTON.

SILVERTHORNE and I wended our way, meeting many of the stragglers who had been thrown out—not from being badly mounted or indifferently equipped in any respect, but from inexperience, or possibly from over-discretion. Some, balking at the first fence, had from that moment lost sight of hounds and huntsmen, and they now only came forward to learn the result of the run, the time exactly occupied, how many had been in at the death of “Master Charley,” when and where the next meet was to come off, and, as Hartopp maliciously remarked, “to carry home the news to their wives.”

My companion seemed anxious to trumpet my praises to every one he met, patted the old horse on the neck, and spoke proudly of his merits. The attitude of Silverthorne on horseback had always much of the stiffness of the old soldier; for in his early youth, when invasion threatened the shores of England, he had served as lieutenant in the Stoneleigh Down Militia, and, like all men whom I have ever known in that branch of the service, he retained to the latest period the reminiscences of drill, and perhaps betrayed the effects of military training to excess. Except when riding at a fence, therefore, he generally carried himself so erect, that one might fancy he was being measured for his height, the quondam lieutenant being at least six feet two.

Ere long we came in sight of his unostentatious and hospitable dwelling,—a house built in the Elizabethan style, with broad stone-mullioned

windows, partly overgrown with creeping plants, which in the summer season presented a gay appearance, but now on the verge of winter showed only a dark green mass of foliage, forming, however, a pleasant contrast with the bright yellow stone. A lawn of a few acres ran in front, while on the other three sides it was surrounded by an enormous farmyard and outbuildings. The whole lay on perfectly level ground, backed by a steep hill, and was approached by a long, straight avenue planted with antique elms, that drooped their branches low into the carriage way. The peaks of a formal row of bright-looking stacks of grain peeped up in the background, and told of that peculiar comfort and abundance which give so cheering an appearance to an English farmyard.

The lowing of cattle greeted us on our approach, and our way was for a time blocked up by a flock of sheep just driven down from the adjacent hills, with their fleeces deeply stained with the bright red earth. A couple of teams had just been taken from the waggons, and the carters were busy in the farmyard rubbing down their horses as we passed.

The aspect of the whole was that of the dwelling of a wealthy, first-class farmer, though Silverthorne was himself the owner of the freehold, and farmed about six or seven hundred acres at Sommerleyton, besides the sheepwalk on the wold, rented from a neighbouring earl. Having been a careful man all his life, with one daughter only to provide for, and no wild, extravagant youths as a drain upon his purse, he had accumulated a goodly store, and was esteemed by the neighbouring farmers as "a rich man, even as times was, not as times went," and by them was generally designated in the district as "the Squire."

I was pleasantly contemplating the scene before me, when, turning my eyes in the direction of the entrance, I observed some female attire fluttering in the breeze, as one of the gentle sex turned the angle of the garden wall, and from the shortness and plumpness of the figure, I could not for a moment mistake who it was that passed out of sight so rapidly.

"Daisy, my child—Daisy," cried old Silverthorne, assuming for the nonce the broad dialect of the district, "where be'st thee running to? won't thee greet thy old friends, gal?"

The heiress of Sommerleyton, however, did not consider it prudent to heed the invitation, and after putting our horses in the hands of the groom, we passed into the hall, spread with simple rush matting, and where an old-fashioned clock ticked behind the door with a sound as loud as a chapel bell.

The old man still continued to call for his daughter, who, however, took the precaution of remaining absent for at least half an hour longer, until at last we found ourselves seated by the parlour fire.

"She'll come by-and-bye," said my hearty host, giving me a significant nod; "let her take her own time: girls will be girls, you know."

The door opened cautiously, and Miss Silverthorne, with a fluttered air and a step as coy and shrinking as a fawn, her face suffused with

blushes, and a pair of pretty dimples in her cheeks, came forward and frankly held out her hand.

"Oh, welcome again to Sommerleyton! Why, I declare we thought you were lost. You have come to stay now?" asked Daisy, fixing upon me her dark, inquisitive eyes.

"Oh yes, and to stay altogether, too," said Silverthorne, laughing and glancing towards me. "I have brought you an old lover, Daisy; and if you let him off this time, it ain't my fault, remember. But you must make your choice; Mr. Fairfax will be here to-morrow."

"Oh, I am so glad," said Daisy, blushing deeply, and casting down her eyes—"so glad that Mr. Fairfax is coming!" thinking, possibly, that her father, who was omnipotent in her eyes, might be about to insist on her entering straightway into matrimonial articles with whomsoever should prove the fortunate man.

"But what! You have been hurt! You have had a fall!" cried Miss Silverthorne, observing the scratch on my brow.

"'Tis nothing," said I; "this rent in my sleeve is the worst of the matter."

"Come, come," said Silverthorne, "get your needle, lass; here's a little trifle in *your* way."

Daisy hesitated, and I protested against the occupation as derogatory to the youthful mistress of Sommerleyton. But as Silverthorne insisted, a few stitches were forthwith passed as a matter of form from shoulder to elbow, Daisy trembling all the while amid the sturdy exhortations of her father not to be awkward, and to take care not to jerk the needle into my flesh.

My host, as usual, presented a homely but substantial repast, seasoned with a hearty welcome. The Sommerleyton cellars had long borne a high celebrity with the men of Stoneleigh Down; and in bringing forth a bottle of his favourite port—which Silverthorne always did with his own hand—he generally proceeded, before drawing the cork, to pronounce a panegyric on its merits.

The conversation of the evening turned chiefly on the doings of Hampton Severn, and the establishment of a local bank there under the auspices of Sir Bedford. Silverthorne added, with a sigh and a motion of his hand towards his breeches pocket, that he feared he had been rash in consenting to become a director. But when I proceeded to assure him that Sir Bedford was not only a man of untold wealth, but a tried and valued friend, his astonishment was naturally great, and mutual confidences provoked mutual confessions.

Silverthorne, however, admitted that he had one anxiety which greatly distressed him, namely, how he should dispose of Daisy's fortune to the best advantage.

"Poor girl," said he, with a serious air, "she will have the old place here when I go, and a good handful of ready cash besides; but I fancy I

might make it better in the mean time. This Sir Bedford seems a wonderful man."

"Why not put Daisy's fortune in the mines of Apulxarras?" said I—the idea just then occurring to me that, besides benefiting myself, I might make use of my City experiences to enrich my country friends; and on none should I have more desired to confer a substantial obligation than on the pretty heiress of Sommerleyton,—“why not put it in the mines of Apulxarras?”

Silverthorne at least admitted that the name had a rich ring in it, and requested to be further enlightened as to the process of conversion. I forthwith proceeded to explain all I knew, and found my host attentive to every syllable.

“Not a bad idea, upon my life,” said Silverthorne, brightening up. “What say you, girl, to the mines of Apulxarras?” he asked his daughter, who chanced to enter the room.

Daisy shook her head with a puzzled expression, tried vainly to pronounce the word, and cast down her gazelle-like eyes in confusion towards the carpet.

“But how is it to be done?” he asked, with an air of increasing interest, and a look which betrayed a profound ignorance regarding complicated questions of finance.

“No difficulty in the world whatever,” I returned; “it is merely the work of half an hour. De Castro will manage the affair for you—Sir Bedford’s chief man of business, and mine.”

“I should like to leave Daisy rich,” said Silverthorne, abstractedly to himself,—“the heiress of Sommerleyton, and something besides. Why shouldn’t she be as good as her neighbours? Oh, ay; we must c’en go with the times, I suppose. A good idea, upon my life; besides, you are both in the same boat,” added he, with a complacent laugh.

The temptation I had thus thrown in the way of my host tended, however, to put a damper upon his customary spirit of conviviality. He was inquisitive and curious as to the rise, fall, and fluctuation in stocks, and vowed that the day after the meet of the Four Ashes he would ride into Hampton Severn and consult with his solicitor, in order to have the operation I recommended effected without delay.

Taking our round of the farmyard next morning, and after surveying the young stock which Silverthorne had bred himself, and from which he augured the best results, he led the way through the paddock to some low grounds adjoining.

“Come and see my old ones,” said he, pointing out three grassy mounds under the shade of a line of old oaks, at the head of which was placed a white painted board, with the inscriptions, “Gipsy Girl,” “Merry Boy,” “Trumpeter.” “There they be. I like to give the poor things that have carried me many a day over hill and dale a quiet spot to rest in at last. They make me think of the old times and pleasant hours

passed on the wold; and if I were to die to-morrow, no man would have a better right to say that he had enjoyed life more than Alfred Silverthorne. The 'General' will take his turn here soon, perhaps, like the others. He's the best of the lot, and I bred him myself. I have no particular fancy for the churchyard," said Silverthorne, "but, do you know, I should like to rest here myself among my horses."

This extraordinary change in the cheerful tone of Silverthorne surprised me not a little. Even the smiles of Daisy at the breakfast-table failed to dissipate the gloomy reflections which the mention of the mines of Apulxarras had evidently produced.

Sir Harry Stanmore, hearing of our stay at Sommerleyton, which had been always our head-quarters while at Stoneleigh Down, had sent over a note early that morning, requesting that Fairfax and I would join his party at dinner the next day, after the meet at the Four Ashes. I began to reflect that Sir Charles might possibly think me somewhat remiss in not inquiring after Adela and Constance since the accident; but Fairfax urged me strenuously not to miss the meet on such choice ground, and I was forced to defer my return to Hampton Severn until the following morning.

After a prosperous run we spent a somewhat roistering evening among Sir Harry's juvenile friends of Collingwood House. Silverthorne and Hartopp were both of the party, and the latter, heated with wine, began to boast freely of his new position as bank director in Hampton Severn, and vowed that six months would not go round before he had a pack of his own as good as Sir Harry's. Hartopp, from his being the most reckless horseman of the Stoneleigh Down hunt, was always a privileged individual at convivial meetings such as these, and his frequent sallies and tales of adventure were greeted with liberal applause by the company. Silverthorne, spite of his age, humorously endeavoured to overbid his rival; and seeing that the follies of the two veterans, who were the butts of the younger men, were rehearsed for their amusement, I was glad to tear myself away at an early hour from a scene which, however ludicrous, did little credit to the host of this company.

With a stirrup-cup from the hands of Daisy next morning—whose eyes filled with tears as we shook her hand—and many protests on the part of Silverthorne at the shortness of our stay at Sommerleyton, Fairfax and I took our departure for Hampton Severn.

"That kind and artless girl," said I, "will certainly make a cheerful and useful wife to the man who has the good sense to link his fate with hers. Do you know, I fear some of my best regrets are left behind at Sommerleyton."

"Heigho!" said Fairfax, "I always have a fit of sadness come over me—and the only fit, too, I ever experience—when I leave this simple rustic abode."

As we pursued our way, the conversation reverted to some of the

incidents of the past. Fairfax questioned me regarding my pursuits in the City, and in turn I felt disposed to indulge my curiosity to know the exact state of his relations with Mademoiselle de Montfort. Yet on neither of these subjects were we inclined to be frank or communicative; and perhaps our mutual reservation was apparent to each other.

"Have you never thought of that strange affair in the shrubbery of De Maintenon?" asked Fairfax, obviously desirous of turning the conversation from his own failings. "Do you know, the memory of it has been haunting me ever since. Could we possibly have been mistaken?"

"Ah! the affair of the arbour. Our surmise was well-founded, depend upon it, though we were not so fortunate as to discover the lady—in all probability, the very same individual whom you should have caught in the *sanctum*, if you had been sharp enough. There was no mistaking the peculiar rustling as we sat in the arbour. The sound was just as you said,—that of a silk dress sweeping rapidly behind us. I could have sworn I was upon the track, and I fancied for the moment that I could hear the sound of footsteps retreating in the distance towards the house."

"It is a mysterious circumstance altogether," said I, thinking over the fact that we were both able to speak positively as to the nature of the interruption. "By the way, have you remarked how ill Louise looked yesterday?" I asked, desirous of diverting the conversation to a subject which gave me so much cause for anxiety.

"Louise!" returned Fairfax, vacantly, as if waking up from a trance; "how your thoughts wander! We were just now speaking of the affair of the arbour. Ah, now, since you have mentioned the matter, I did remark that Louise looked wretched—I mean much altered, and I sincerely trust the country air will do her good. Like everybody else, I suppose she requires a change."

"And it is I who am to blame for all this," thought I, as we rode along without speaking; "would that I could now undo all my foolish judgment prompted! I must speak with Louise alone."

CHAPTER XXV.

MITTE NEGOTIUM—JAM DATUR OTIUM.

"BUT what have we to do here?" said Fairfax, as we rode through the main street of Hampton Severn, while he pointed to a newly-constructed building with an imposing front, on which the word "BANK" was affixed in large letters. Three or four statues, also, executed in stone, adorned the tympanum of the façade, and contrasted singularly with the lowliness and simplicity of the adjoining houses.

"Justice, Plenty, Fortune, Plutus. Upon my life, Rushton has taste in everything to which he puts his hand. Classical, isn't it? But

don't you think it spoils our little village, Fairfax? Now I really wish they had left matters as they were."

"I say Amen to that with all my heart. The big house dwarfs the cottages into pigmies, as if it had contracted half their size in order to erect itself. See, there's a great oak staring up at the Penates of the place. See, Mr. O'Grady bows and waves his hand more graciously than ever. This affair of the accident, I suspect, will make you decidedly a lion here."

"I begin to fear the Wyndhams will think it strange. I have sent to make no inquiries after the ladies."

"Then do so by all means, without loss of time, and make an apology," said Fairfax. "You may consider yourself a lucky fellow that the affair has turned out so well; and it will be your own fault if you don't follow it up with advantage."

I hastened with an anxious heart to pay my respects to Sir Charles Wyndham, who I found had repeatedly called at my rooms to know if I had yet got back from Stoneleigh Down; leaving a note, couched in the warmest terms, thanking me in the name of himself and his daughters for the courage and decision I had shown. He added a hope that I had sustained no injury by my fall, and an urgent request that I would visit them on the earliest opportunity, as the girls were impatient to record their thanks in two pretty orations, which they had succeeded in getting off by heart.

Sir Charles recognized me from the window as I passed, and waved a welcome.

"The girls have been quite impatient to see you," said he, holding out both hands. "These three days' absence have almost made us think that you were going to desert us; but it is our turn to make the advance now."

Miss Wyndham uttered a cry of surprise as I entered, and came forward eagerly to seize my hand; while Constance, who was reclining in an arm-chair near the fire, and closely wrapped up, held out hers with a languid smile of welcome.

"But did you not sustain some serious injury?" inquired all three together. "Our agitation was so great at the moment," said Adela, "that we observed nothing that passed around us."

"Oh, my escape, they tell me, was entirely owing to the good steed on which I happened to be mounted. He was as steady as a rock all the time. I came off with the merest scratch, a contusion on the shoulder, which I don't in the least feel at the present moment. But I fear that your sister must still be a sufferer," said I, turning towards Constance, who merely replied by a faint smile.

"Nothing but a little nervousness," said Sir Charles. "We have all reason to be thankful for the result."

"It was indeed a courageous and manly act," said Adela.

"Is it not better that all these things should be forgotten?" said I,

interposing in favour of Constance ; " the very remembrance is sufficient to cause a revival of agitation. I declare the ladies, Sir Charles, deserve the highest praise for the presence of mind they evinced.—But I fear my entry must have interrupted your music, Miss Wyndham ; and, as I am passionately fond of it in all its branches —— Ah ! Beethoven, — a favourite of mine."

" And perhaps, like your friend Fairfax, you are a performer?" inquired Sir Charles.

" No ; I can only boast of being a good listener."

" And what has become of Fairfax?" asked both the ladies. " Was he not with you on the ground?"

" Oh yes ; but we were detained by some convivialities at Collingwood House, and had, besides, to beat up some of our old friends in the neighbourhood. But we returned together to Hampton Severn this morning. I have no doubt Fairfax will call to pay his respects in due course."

" Don't you find some difficulty," asked Sir Charles, " in getting through your time at this idle place—nothing but balls, dinner giving, riding excursions, and general lounging from morning to night?"

" Were it not for the hunting I should certainly find some difficulty, for my part, in passing the time. But I really have been so occupied of late, that I am down here more for the sake of a little relief and relaxation."

" Oh, busy," said Sir Charles. " Nothing like work as a zest to enjoyment, for either young or old;" and he here gave me a glance of inquiry, as though he felt interested to know the nature of my occupation ; and I was revolving with myself what answer I should make if he pressed for a direct inquiry, when Miss Wyndham moved towards the piano, and preluded a *legato* movement from one of Beethoven's oratorios. As her fingers ran over the ivory keys with a delicate touch and graceful motion, that devotional melody seemed a hymn of praise, and the vision of the Saxon church floated again before me, accompanied by the remembrance of the strange, fantastic dream I had on the night of the opera. Nor could I forbear thinking likewise at that moment of the fate of poor Louise, the unmistakable change in the conduct of Fairfax, and my own folly and stupidity in giving advice in matters where he ought to have been as good a judge as myself. And as my eyes fell upon the slender and elegant form of Constance Wyndham, as she reclined in her invalid chair, my suspicion suggested that it was possibly *there* the wavering affections of Fairfax had settled—perhaps in this case to be revoked when the novelty had lost its charm.

The reflection made me sad and thoughtful. I longed, for my own justification, to have an interview with Louise. As I took my leave, Sir Charles expressed a hope that the attractions of the locality would not make me forget their quiet circle. He joined the name of Fairfax with my own, and I soon learned from further conversation that my friend stood

high in the favour of Sir Charles and the ladies, though they both frankly admitted that he was somewhat of a truant in his way.

During the following week, Fairfax and I continued to pay our respects to the Wyndhams, and to join them in riding excursions. Some of my old hunting acquaintances complained that I had brought down a stud, of which I was making no use, and I was not sorry when the arrival of Rushton at Hampton Severn took some of these privileged loungers off my hands.

Of course his chief conversation ran upon the prospects of the mines of Apulxarras; but Sir Bedford was out of humour. Some circumstance had evidently occurred to ruffle his temper, and render him unusually sarcastic. I felt so satisfied with my improved relations with the Wyndhams, that I dismissed to the winds all anxiety regarding my concerns in the City, and felt indisposed to question him directly as to the cause. The principal theme of his conversation was ridicule of the gay loungers of Hampton Severn, whom he never passed in his rounds without as freely administering the lash. Fairfax, likewise, came in for a share of his censure; and I could see that six months had produced a marked change in their respective bearings towards each other, and a coldness had evidently been engendered, which I concluded was only to be explained by Arthur's strange and unaccountable conduct towards Louise.

No one, however, could be more happy and at his ease than Arthur Fairfax. His natural flow of spirits and love of gaiety seemed to have found their most congenial sphere at Hampton Severn. Now spending a day with Sir Harry Stanmore at Collingwood; now lounging away the afternoons on the esplanade with Jack Gribbleton, or sustaining on horseback a combat of repartee with Miss Georgina Raikes. Though all his serious attentions were evidently reserved for Constance Wyndham, I rejoiced to see that Louise also came in still for at least a formal share of his courtesy. He never failed to select her as his first partner for a waltz or quadrille, though he danced with her but once of an evening; while Constance received, even in the presence of her rival, the chief share of his time and conversation. "Why did he not break off the affair at once?" I frequently asked myself, seeing how disappointment and anguish were, hour by hour, stealing away the bloom and freshness from the cheek of Louise.

The time, meanwhile, rolled by pleasantly enough for me, and my friendship with the Wyndhams had now attained a point of intimacy which placed me perfectly at my ease. I felt, however, there were many barriers yet to be overcome ere I could think of placing myself in the exact position which Fairfax had assumed in regard to Constance. His acquaintance was of much longer standing than mine; besides, there was something in the character of Adela Wyndham which rendered the most gradual approaches on my part an element of my future success. However, I now felt convinced, from the frank and cordial manner in which Sir Charles treated me, that there was no obstacle in the way.

I now began to find the society of Sir Bedford greatly to interfere with my plans of recreation and enjoyment. He insisted on dragging me into discussions on the subject of my City engagements, which I fondly flattered myself I had dismissed at least for three months. He alluded, though with evident caution, to certain rumours, which, like straws floating on the surface, indicated the commencement of a distrust on the part of moneyed men. I endeavoured to turn a deaf or an indifferent ear to these allusions, and sometimes frankly protested against Sir Bedford's frequent intrusion of these subjects *ad nauseam* into the conversation of our daily walks.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LEAVE-TAKING.

"WE have sprung a leak!" said Sir Bedford, one morning, suddenly entering my rooms, and placing some papers he had just received in my hands.

"A leak?" said I, in surprise; "what do you mean?"

"Why, there's water in the mine, and six men drowned—that's all. I fear it will prove a serious affair. The business must be promptly attended to. We must act with vigour. I hope De Castro is not playing false. You must be aware that the working of all these concerns is attended with some risk to life and limb, therefore you need not be alarmed at the accident in the mines."

"But you hinted at De Castro playing false?"

"Well, it is only a suspicion; perhaps I am wrong; but I think you had better come off to town without delay. You are only wasting your time in this place. Take my advice, and do not sacrifice business for the company of the idlers of Hampton Severn."

"But," said I, naturally annoyed at the idea of returning to London, "I have friends here whom I respect, whose society is not only a source of pleasure, but may be of importance to me at a future day."

"Well, you must leave them; your affairs require looking to. This change in the value of money has come sooner than I expected; and my impression is that we shall have things worse before we see them better."

"I really would prefer to discuss these dry matters elsewhere. If I must go to town, why, then, I must. But I candidly confess I feel quite a relief in the society here, trivial as it may seem to you, after the wearying anxiety I have experienced for the last three months in that odious City."

"Oh! you are beginning to complain already?"

"No, no; far from that. I merely confess a liking; that I am perfectly content where I am."

"Just so," returned Rushton, in a tone of reproof; "relapsing into

one of your old listless moods, of which you used to complain so much to Fairfax. Come, rouse up, and do not let the old feeling creep over you."

This sudden interruption to my plans for the season caused me no small discomfort and uneasiness; but my interest was sufficiently aroused by the observations of Rushton, after an hour's conversation, that I felt it was absolutely necessary I should forthwith proceed with him to town. De Castro had already been admitted largely into my confidence, partly from the fatigue I felt in attending to business, and partly from my deficiency in the knowledge of details which required to be mastered. The secretary of the Apulxarras Mining Company had, therefore, proved a ready and willing ally, and enabled me to get through important affairs without stumbling or hesitation.

The announcement of my intended departure from Hampton Severn naturally took Fairfax and the Wyndhams by surprise. Arthur pooh-poohed the resolution, and insisted that it should be deferred for a month. When Sir Charles inquired as to the cause of my sudden departure, I spoke generally of the pressing engagements of business in London; and when complimented on my readiness to sacrifice pleasure to duty, I blushed to own that a most undeserved compliment had been passed upon me.

It was necessary to take a formal leave of the Wyndhams, and I felt naturally a little sadness, if not indeed a slight sinking of the heart, at the thought of parting from a circle of friends with whom I had more than one reason for not abruptly breaking the ties of association. My imagination or my fears were always raising up barriers which kept me aloof from the principal object of attraction. It might have been a want of confidence in myself, or an exaggerated estimate of the superior merits of the ladies. I concluded also that the time was not yet come, and that I had many sacrifices yet to make before I could hope to place myself in the favoured position of a lover. Agitated by such misgivings, my effort at leave-taking was perhaps somewhat awkward and confused. Miss Wyndham, observing my manner, assumed a more frank and cordial tone, and expressed a hope that we should all meet ere long, and that Sir Charles had promised to secure a large circle of friends during their sojourn at Hurstfield.

"Of course," said Constance, "we do not mean to let either you or Fairfax escape. Besides, you must give us some opportunity of requiting favours conferred."

"Oh, I hoped I had heard the last of the Stoneleigh Down affair," said I; "but really it is very flattering to me to find my merits kept so long alive. Sir Charles pointed out so many inducements for my visiting Hurstfield next spring, that I was constrained into giving a promise of making a pilgrimage thither."

"Then remember to bring all your gaiety along with you," said Adela; "for we are in a peculiarly dull part of the country, and our neighbours are

not remarkable for brilliancy. But then the rides and drives are charming."

"All that I shall so much enjoy," said I, pleased to find that Miss Wyndham reiterated the request of Sir Charles.

"Nay, don't say much more," said Constance, turning round in a half remonstrating way, "or Mr. Marston will be disappointed. In short, we are very stupid at home, and you and Fairfax must undertake to amuse us."

My interview lasted longer than I expected, and more than once I was on the eve of waiving the good resolution I had formed of going up to town with Sir Bedford, and allowing my affairs to take the chance of what good or evil fortune might betide. But then I should undergo a double charge of irresolution; and was it not better even to break such ties and submit to a little personal inconvenience for the sake of the prospective advantages in store? "Six months more resolutely devoted to business," said I, with an ominous sinking of the heart, "and I shall be free again."

CHAPTER XXVII.

A JOURNEY BACK TO LONDON.

I FOUND Sir Bedford at the railway station, already prepared to accompany me to town. Though his manner was brusque and impatient, he was in buoyant spirits at the thought of returning again to his old avocations.

"I can't say," he observed, "that I found a single soul at this stupid place with whom I could spend one hour with satisfaction. Idleness, as our copy-book tells us, is the root of all evil; but I'll be hanged if it does not bring its own punishment in the mental misery which ensues. What has a man to show for his time here? Waste both of mind and body. As for those two rustic friends of yours, Silverthorne and Hartopp, my head aches yet with the effort to instil anything into brains as barren as their unploughed furrows. Think of two mortal hours consumed in the bank parlour with such fellows! Sir Harry Stanmore has only language for his dogs, or about the success of his book. What a pity to see a man of position ruin that fine constitution! But is it to be wondered at, considering the dulness and *ennui* of country life? Men must resort to some expedients to get through their time, and make existence tolerable."

"Come, come," said I, not caring for this cynical strain, "I fear you are out of humour to-day."

"Not a bit of it; I never was in a more congenial humour in my life."

As we approached London, Rushton threw off his moodiness, and be-

came more communicative. He drew my attention to the number and variety of the country seats and trim villas that dotted the landscape on every side, and related many anecdotes regarding the personal history of the owners which he had picked up in his intercourse with city life.

"Now this is a sight," said he, "which you will find in no other country in the world. England, after all, is the veritable *el dorado*. In Italy you may have equal or greater beauty of landscape, and if you are an antiquarian, your thoughts will be carried back by a thousand objects to bygone things. In France you will be consoled for the monotonous and uniform character of the scenery by the intercourse of a sociable and expansive people, and find that the highest and lowest in that country possess a natural equality which makes their conversation interesting and intelligible; but in England alone will you find real wealth—taste for the comforts and luxuries of life united to industry and labour. The riches of the earth seem to flow spontaneously into the lap of this favoured island. In such a country, what man can be content to gaze listlessly on the prosperity he sees around him, and tamely submit to see his poorer neighbour shoot ahead of him? Observe," said Sir Bedford, pointing in the distance, "that mansion fairly seated on yonder hill. The owner of that dwelling was not long since a poor man; but he had courage and enterprise; and now he can boast of possessing a greater number of acres than the noble lord whose estate adjoins his mansion. What need have we for political changes in this country, when on every side a perpetual revolution of fortune is going forward? An energetic individual springing up into importance on one side or another, an old, worn-out family disappears and becomes extinct. It is the common lot, the oft-repeated tale of everyday life. What becomes of them, Heaven only knows; but it is a revolution which follows the law of nature, and it should be the law everywhere."

Although I did not agree with Rushton's arguments, I did not like to confess my feeling to him, and he continued to impress on me the theory he so frequently enforced,—“A man should, above all things, endeavour to stand well with his class. He should endeavour to avoid being despised and looked down upon; and I am aware of no better means of answering that end in this country and in these times than wealth; and next to the possession of actual wealth, I should say, the reputation for it. But I fear I am a wearisome lecturer, and harp too much upon this subject.”

“Oh, by no means; your conversation is not only agreeable, but informing. Besides, as I am now somewhat deeply involved, it is better that I should have my mind kept on the alert.”

“Otherwise, depend upon it, you must be a sufferer. Yet there is no necessity that it should absorb you entirely. Do as I have done: mix freely in the pomps and vanities of the world; see life, and participate in its pleasures as you go along. That is the true philosophy. I mean the

combination of business with enjoyment. And see what Parliament is doing nowadays, generously relaxing all those stupid laws which operated as a bugbear, and fettered the action of the speculator. Public opinion has proved too strong for the old-fashioned theories of the Sir John Barnard school."

"But yet I must candidly confess that I have no desire to pursue this game of speculation so as to turn it into a permanent occupation. One year more, at the very most, will satisfy my utmost wishes."

"Well, I admit that your good luck is astonishing, meaning no disparagement to you. I might compare you to a novice who, never having held a pistol in his hand before, yet wings his antagonist in his first duel. Such accidents are of every-day occurrence, and are inexplicable."

"But yet, Sir Bedford, I think I may attribute the greater part of my success so far to your good counsel, discernment, and advice."

"And to your own nerve and perseverance. Don't you forget the first and leading principle. But the ides of March are not yet arrived; and it is one of my cardinal rules never to sum up the gifts of Fortune while she has anything in her power. Endeavour to defeat the fickle jade by your own exertions."

Sir Bedford would gladly have continued much longer to impress his favourite doctrines upon my mind; but we were now arrived within sight of the metropolis. In the light of the evening sun the tall spires of the churches first became visible, shooting up in long, bright lines from the horizon. Then large and massive piles of building gradually met the eye, increasing in extent and grandeur as we advanced and swept around them. Everything indicated our proximity to a busy hive, which swarmed with human life and activity, fed by a constant stream which invigorated and sustained the labours of the mass within. Contrasted with the aspect of the country which I had just left, the sensation was painful. I felt weighed down by an inexplicable feeling of depression. My vigilance was instinctively aroused, and I felt assured that the relaxation and repose for which I had sighed was for a season at an end.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"INCREASE HIS RICHES, AND HIS PEACE DESTROY."

LEFT to my own reflections, I could not resist the current of my thoughts being directed to the character of Rushton. Here was a man who had succeeded, in a few months, in winding himself into my confidence, inducing me to embark the whole of my capital and the proceeds of an ancient patrimony in the uncertain risks of speculation. I admired his talent and address in business, his knowledge of the world, and the hard experiences which fitted him so well to contend with his fellow-men in the

race of life ; but I was losing much of my early fascination, and had begun to feel the first suspicions that Rushton's morality was essentially unsound, if not possibly dangerous. The bias of his opinions was in the main opposed to my own convictions ; his theories of society and politics were harsh, cynical, and false ; and there was little sympathy between us on the score of pursuits and amusements : but, nevertheless, he had become my Mentor for the hour, and for my ultimate advantage it was better to let him enjoy the triumph. And so necessity induced me to submit to his guidance and dictation, when my heart condemned the language and principles he avowed.

But the extent to which I had become involved in a variety of speculations, the pressing claims which were daily becoming due in respect of these, and the complicated nature of many of the transactions, rendered it necessary that the strictest confidence in Sir Bedford should be reposed, whatever misgivings may have presented themselves to my mind. I grew weary of the labour to which I was subjected. I felt that it was in every way repugnant to my previous habits of life, and was destitute of all satisfaction in a moral point of view. But to withdraw from the design in which I had embarked, merely from the sense of inconvenience, looked like want of firmness and resolution.

I was now again daily encountering the familiar faces which I had lost during my visit to Hampton Severn. Indeed, I had no sooner set foot in the City than Mr. Gareb Rimmon, as dark and mysterious as ever, brushed past with a hasty bow of recognition and welcome. He was always apparently too busy to exchange words, and seemed to move about stealthily, with the air of a man watching the game, and urging on the players, rather than implicated himself ; indifferent alike to gain or loss, his thoughts absorbed, as it were, with the advent of some great event which his prophetic power enabled him to foresee.

"If you get into a difficulty, you must go to Gareb Rimmon," said Rushton one day to me, confidentially. "The Jews can do anything and everything in these days. I have a profound respect for the race, which holds not only the secret which attracts us to heaven, but possesses also the most potent engine which has ever influenced the passions and pursuits of this lower world."

I now began to be concerned for the ultimate fate of Silverthorne's investment, for which I was responsible. De Castro had completed the arrangement before I had returned to town, and he spoke confidently of the result. It was impossible to dispense with his advice and assistance, and I necessarily put the greatest confidence in our secretary, and I had no reason to doubt either his honour or his judgment. When I assured him that my own position, as well as that of my friend, made me naturally anxious about the issue, De Castro observed, with frankness,—

"As to this accident in the mines, though your stake is considerable, it is a mere bagatelle to the more serious consequences of a monetary crisis.

It may cost us five or ten thousand pounds, perhaps, to repair the damage; it may affect our dividends; but a month's favourable working will again set matters right. For so young an undertaking, our success, so far, has been almost unexampled, and I have every confidence in the mines of Apulxarras."

It being a board day, Sir Bedford at this instant entered, bringing along with him Mr. M'Phun, whose grave countenance was unusually lengthened by the reported disaster. Sir Bedford, on the other hand, affected a particularly cheerful humour, and endeavoured to infuse hope into his friend. But De Castro hung in the background, and seemed to shrink from the eye of Rushton as if something had occurred to destroy the harmony which subsisted between the secretary and his employer.

Mr. M'Phun appeared not over-reconciled with Sir Bedford's pleasantry on the occasion, and, without relaxing the doleful expression of his countenance, made inquiries of De Castro regarding the precise nature of the accident.

"Puir fallows!" he frequently ejaculated, as he listened to the details of the narrative involving so serious a loss of life and property. "But the damage is na trifle, Sir Bedford. Do you think we may live in hope?" inquired Mr. M'Phun, with the air of a man awaiting his sentence at the hands of the judge.

"Hope? to be sure!" exclaimed Rushton, "but not such exaggerated expectations as will ever satisfy your imagination, Mr. M'Phun. If you were only elated by good fortune as much as you are depressed by bad, you might balance account with your feelings; but during all our late success I am not aware that you ever gave way to any enthusiasm."

"I seriously hope all may turn out well," said Mr. M'Phun, with a funereal air which brought a smile into the otherwise clouded face of the secretary.

The members of the board now began to drop in one by one, and I could observe by their manner that they were evidently prepared for a discouraging report of the day's proceedings. Sir Bedford, however, put the boldest face on matters until Mr. Fosdyke made his appearance, entering the room as usual with extreme haste, and almost overturning in his way the poet, who was gazing abstractedly into the fire.

A shade of irritation was on the brow of the Eastern Counties contractor. He was evidently preparing himself for a conflict, and from time to time seemed to throw suspicious glances at Rushton and De Castro as the accounts were passed in review. The noble lord sat uneasy and embarrassed in his chair; the two staid merchants from Mincing Lane showed more signs of life and independent action than on previous occasions; the Quaker looked testy and quarrelsome; while Mr. M'Phun sat with his hat on his knees in the deepest abstraction, and I took it for granted that his thoughts were occupied with subjects of a much purer and more elevated character than those under discussion.

"Gentlemen," said Rushton, "I have to regret the withdrawal, since last meeting, of a member of our board from all interest in our concerns. Mr. Arthur Fairfax is no longer a director of the mines of Apulxarras."

It was the first I had heard of Arthur's secession, and the announcement took me by surprise. As to the members of the board, they merely looked with sour significance at each other, as if Fairfax's services were not of a nature to require any confession of regret on their part.

Sir Bedford then launched freely into the altered condition of our undertaking, which was intrinsically good, and wound up by declaring to the astonished assembly that no dividend could possibly be expected for the past half-year.

"What! Sir Bedford," exclaimed Mr. M'Phun, with a start which made him drop his hat on the floor, "nae deevendend! Ye canna affirm that the mines of Apulxarras will pay us nae deevendend!"

"I have no power over unforeseen accidents, Mr. M'Phun," said Rushton, firmly. "You do not suppose that I can turn granite, or schist, or limestone into silver?"

"No; but, Sir Bedford," said Mr. Fosseydyke, reviving the memory of his old opposition, "we put implicit confidence in your judgment."

"Then you at least broke through your invariable rule, Mr. Fosseydyke, of questioning every act I performed," retorted Rushton. "As a man of business, and seated in that chair, you had ample opportunity, which you never hesitated to make use of, of setting me right. Why should I be expected to act and think for you all?" and Rushton, like a stag at bay, glanced at the secretary and me for approval of what he affirmed. Mr. M'Phun decidedly seemed to suffer most on the occasion. His countenance wore a sad and disappointed expression,—which, indeed, was only natural, considering that his fond dreams of wealth had always been disproportionately exaggerated through his imaginative tendencies; nor could all Sir Bedford's assurances that six months would suffice to restore prosperity to our affairs relax the aspect of melancholy boding which his visage assumed.

Nor did I fail to observe that De Castro seemed to have forfeited the high confidence which Sir Bedford usually reposed in the secretary, which set my suspicion on the rack to discover what source of difference had arisen between them. One consequence undoubtedly ensued from this meeting,—the shares of the Apulxarras mines fell rapidly in the market. Sales had been pressed, but from what quarter I was unable to guess. De Castro attributed the change to a fearful distrust which was growing up among commercial men; but Rushton refused to regard the fall as a sign of our weakness. For my own part, I felt callous to all sense of pecuniary loss. I was becoming somewhat disgusted with the clandestine nature of my pursuits. I wished to shake myself free of them; and as I

hesitated to place the same confidence in the advice and judgment of Rushton which I had formerly done, I felt the want of some disinterested friend, with whom I could frankly confer and unbosom myself on the subject which filled my mind with anxiety and suspicion.

CHAPTER XXIX.

INDICATIONS OF A CRISIS.

I SAUNTERED into St. James's Street, oppressed with a feeling of stupor and heaviness. I had not darkened the doors of the Corinthian Club for months, and I now mechanically strolled into the morning-room, and took up a paper, not to read, but with the desire of being undisturbed.

Could I believe my eyes? There, in front of me, sat Arthur Fairfax at his old station, reclining in an easy chair at the projecting window of the club.

"Glad to see you, my dear fellow. I only arrived in town this morning," said Fairfax, rising to offer his hand.

"And you have taken a run up to settle matters with Rushton, I suppose?"

"Rushton!" echoed Fairfax, the blood mounting to his cheek as he spoke; "where can your thoughts be wandering?"

"Why, I was just thinking that, since you have withdrawn yourself from all concern in the mines of Apulxarras, our chairman might probably have required a reason for your want of confidence."

"Oh, that is an affair of some months past. Did I not inform you of the step? But it was a trifle not worth speaking of; besides, I dreaded to disturb your dream of bliss, seeing the career of success you had chalked out for yourself. To tell you the truth, I wished to absolve myself of all obligation to Rushton, and so sold my shares forthwith."

"At a loss?"

"No; at something like a hundred per cent. premium. I felt a little compunction at taking the money, I assure you. It had so much the character of a loot," said Fairfax, laughing, "that I was going to bestow it in charity."

"Upon my word, you seem to have a pretty sort of spiced conscience in money matters," said I, feeling a sense of humiliation after Fairfax's peculiarly frank commentary.

"Well, you have been precious lucky, that's all, considering what a jolly time you have had during your directorship. The shares of the Apulxarras mines fell yesterday fifty per cent."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Fairfax, holding up his hands. "What an escape for my little boat! But I hope you are well out of it. Do you know, my friend, these City affairs don't improve a man's looks? nay,

I think," added he, glancing at me from head to foot, "you are hardly up to the mark as you used to be in the matter of dress. Don't you fear the club lions as you pass them in that attire in St. James's Street?"

"Believe me, I have not visited the club for the last three months. I only lounged in here to-day by the merest chance."

"And that just explains why you are not up to the mark. There's no denying at least that the club is a good corrective of slovenly habits, and I confess I am ashamed of your appearance, you look so soiled by rubbing against these City men. Believe me, you had better call in the aid of the Corinthians to give you a lesson in style. Just cast your eye into yonder mirror, and see how gathered your coat is about the shoulders, not to say a word as to the spots on your boots, gloves without buttons, and a hat that would shock an Israelite!"

"I feel neither inconvenience nor alarm, I assure you, on the score of these deficiencies," said I; though I probably admitted that Fairfax's judgment might be correct, after all, as I took a stealthy glance at my figure in the mirror.

"No inconvenience! But you should regard public opinion," said Arthur, with a slight sneer at the Corinthians, who were not only the best dressing men in London, but when ill at ease had a singular knack of showing the backs of their coats to one another.

"How you wander from the point whence you set out!" said I, somewhat nettled at having my personal peculiarities thus criticised. "You said you wished to make me a confidant."

"Yes: I wish to make you aware of the fact," said Fairfax; and we passed into the smoking-room, which was then quite unoccupied.

Assuming an air of mystery, and approaching nearer, "You must know that Sir Charles, during my sojourn at Hampton Severn, has been peculiarly frank with me, and actually went so far as to give me a hint on the subject of my attentions towards Constance. Well, Sir Charles offered no obstacle; and though we conversed together in a general sort of way on the advantages of settling down early in life, I feel now assured that, if I could only decide on prosecuting the matter further, there would not be the slightest difficulty on his part.

"Prosecute the matter further!" exclaimed I, in a tone of surprise and reproach; "how is it possible you can treat these delicate questions with such levity and indecision."

"I am really serious," persisted Fairfax. "I think Constance Wyndham would make an excellent sort of wife,—not impassioned, but quiet and ladylike; and perhaps as likely to prove a companionable partner to rub on through life with as any one of my acquaintance."

"And so you *have* decided at last?" I asked, looking earnestly at Fairfax, still unwilling to believe that he had dismissed all memory of Louise de Montfort from his mind.

"Firmly and irrevocably," said Fairfax. "I mean to make an effort.

The advice you gave me some time back was sound; and to tell you the truth, I begin to feel at times some of the qualms of poor Jack Gribbleton, and fancy that 'love's young dream' may possibly pass away in my case as rapidly as in his. I suppose it is the common lot."

"And have you no regret in making this last choice?—no anxiety as to the causes of misery you may bring on others? In a word, you seem to have utterly forgotten your old flame, Mademoiselle de Montfort!"

Arthur seemed quite prepared for my challenge, but could not conceal his evident agitation at the mention of the name of Louise.

"We have been less together than formerly," said he, in a half-musing way; "though, strange to say, when I told her I was about to leave Hampton Severn to come to town, she admitted also that her period of leave had expired, and that she must instantly join her friends in London."

"And does Louise still retain that anxious, careworn expression, to which I drew your attention at Hampton Severn? There seems to be a terrible weight upon the heart of that woman, Arthur, and in my soul I believe you are the cause."

Fairfax became alternately red and white at my insinuation. He was evidently labouring with feelings which he was anxious to repress. His soft, feminine features at length resumed their former placidity, and taking my hand, he said,—

"I know you mean well. I may have done wrong. As to Rushton's interference, of which you formerly spoke, allow me to say that I must be permitted to take my own course in affairs of this sort, and, if needs be, to bear the responsibility. Rushton," added Fairfax, waxing warmer, "presumes too much upon my friendship or good nature. He fancies, perhaps, that because it is to him I owe my introduction to Louise, he can bully me into a declaration of love; but he is mistaken."

"And you have not considered," I ventured to ask, "the consequences which your attentions may have had upon the heart of Louise during your first intimacy? Believe me, Arthur, your impulsiveness—the undisguised frankness of your conduct, exhibited, as it was, to all the world—has been a serious mistake."

"I grant all you say," said Fairfax, evidently moved by my appeal; "but I have been more on my guard of late."

"Ay, there it is. You have been drawing off. Louise has seen—as every woman under similar circumstances must have seen—your coldness of manner, and the obvious effort you make to appear indifferent to her when she is present; but yet, Fairfax, I question much whether you do not in reality love this woman more than you care to confess. The memory of her former attachment seems to act like a wasting fire within her; and in the waning beauty of Louise you may trace the sufferings of which you alone are the cause."

Fairfax, evidently affected by my words, made no reply. I could not

doubt that I had made a correct guess as to the real object which still enchained his affections. Constance Wyndham might be his wife, but Louise de Montfort would still claim possession of his heart.

He remained thoughtful for a few moments; and after taking a few paces round the room, with a degree of distress in his looks which gave to his worn features the aspect of a consumptive patient, he resumed his seat, and said, with an abstracted air,—

"Strange that I have never yet made an explicit declaration of love to that girl; nothing that a third party could contrive into such a confession has ever escaped me. And yet you and others set me down as the accepted suitor of Louise."

"But see how unguarded you have been in your intercourse. Consider how your general conduct has been reciprocated by her. The attachment of Louise was unmistakable to every eye. Do you know, I can fancy no other reason for her visit to Hampton Severn but the fact of your going to spend the season there; and see, she pursues you here again when you resolve on coming up to town."

"You are right," said Fairfax, moodily, biting his lip and turning aside. "There seems to me to be some fatality about this acquaintance,—something that is inexplicable, as if unseen agents were at work from the commencement to wind round me a fascination from which even now I can hardly disengage myself."

"There is no mystery at all in the matter, Arthur. You love Louise; and if true affection can insure happiness, believe me you have it in your power at this moment. I would not have you break with Constance Wyndham, but do justice to this woman. Remember that such combinations of circumstances as we sketch out for ourselves in our day-dreams rarely, if ever, become realities. Few can hope to enjoy them all. That image of ideal perfection, which perpetually flatters us in our pursuit of excellence in any form, is often found, too late, to be a mistake. The confession is a proverb."

"Marriage!" exclaimed Fairfax, turning away his head in token of dissent. "No; I can never wed Louise. I once may have indulged such hopes, but the dream is past. Circumstances change; tastes change; and marriage is, I fear, after all, but a humdrum affair. I used to think that love was the best prompter in these matters; but the more I see of the world, Aubrey, the more I become prosaic, and perhaps a little sceptical about this imaginary happiness."

"Well, I will plead no more," said I, somewhat disappointed at this exhibition of *sang froid* on the part of Fairfax, which I could not help thinking was half affected.

I next confided to Fairfax the state of affairs in the City, and he held up his hands in surprise at the account I gave of the enormous extent of my transactions.

"What on earth could have tempted you, with a good £2,000 a year, to rush into this pursuit with such recklessness?"

"Why," I retorted, in a tone of self-defence, "did not you and Rushton both proclaim the mercenary character of the age, and that wealth was the only passport to the good favour of fathers and mothers, and perhaps of those dearest to them?"

"I spoke only of the aspiring middle classes," said Fairfax. "I fear Sir Charles will not give you much credit for setting *him* down in that list. Really, the case looks very bad against you, and you had better keep the history of your gains a secret from Miss Wyndham; for depend upon it she will read it in the most unfavourable light."

"She will misjudge me, then. I have had a motive, Fairfax, and a noble one, for all these risks. Do not suppose that I have sacrificed the Marston Estate without an object, or that I have consented to harass my mind for the last eight months to minister to a passion for speculation, or to make a false exhibition of wealth in the eyes of the world. My aim, when it shall be made manifest, will appear to be founded in the most honourable and praiseworthy intentions."

"Well, that may all be; but, rely upon it, as long as it remains a secret, the world will unhesitatingly impute to you the most selfish, indeed, I may say the most grasping, motives. If you desire to stand well with Sir Charles, I think you had better not say a word to him on the matter, until you feel you are secure,—in short, until you are satisfied that you are well out of the wood."

"That is my plan. But to be frank with you, Fairfax, the magnitude of these speculations, in which I have been involved through the agency of Rushton, has begun to worry me more than I dare to confess."

"You have got yourself into a pretty mess," said Fairfax, assuming the manner of a friend who desires to administer a gentle reproof; "and I suppose you must only do as other men under such circumstances,—that is, trust to the chapter of accidents, and pray devoutly to the gods that affairs may not prove so disastrous as your imaginings. Give up the City for a month or two. Take a run down with me into Kent. We can amuse ourselves there with a little wild-fowl shooting; or now, when I think of it, as we were both invited to Hurstfield, let us make the visit a little in advance of the period fixed by Sir Charles, and join the girls. We shall have the house all to ourselves. Their expected visitors will not have arrived."

"Oh, that, I fear, would be taking a liberty which my short acquaintance by no means warrants. Sir Charles would feel it an intrusion."

"Don't be mistaken. We shall both receive a most hearty welcome, and you will discover, perhaps, that you stand better with your friends than you imagine."

The proposal seemed to suit so well with my increasing repugnance to all speculative pursuits, that I consented to name a day for an excursion to

Hurstfield. The state of affairs in the monetary world increased my anxiety. I was indeed hopelessly involved, if Rushton's good genius did not extricate me. My many liabilities only produced a confusion of brain when I attempted to grapple with the subject. I remembered how I had put my name to a great variety of documents without contemplating the consequences. But Sir Bedford and De Castro were alone in the secret, and the former always whispered to me to make my mind easy regarding the present crisis, that Gareb Rimmon was his friend, and that we should ride triumphantly through the difficulty while he stood unshaken.

But the indications of a more prosperous state of affairs were by no means promising. A general distrust, following the fever of exaggerated confidence, had begun to pervade the commercial world. The face of every City passenger reflected, in his anxious, uneasy look, the character of public opinion, and the rumour of coming evils assumed a mysterious importance in the mouths of those who felt that their position was secure. As for Gareb Rimmon, he shook his head ominously, and said nothing. Yet, during the worst fever of the crisis, he seemed to be everywhere present, flitting about like a bird of ill omen. What a strange smile was now on the lips of that dark man!—a smile of triumph and mockery. What a look of profound wisdom, or the affectation of it! as if he, by virtue of some superior gift, were alone possessed of the secret which could calm the terrors of those who were trembling at that hour for the existence of their houses. Could such a man, I often asked myself, have a spark of sympathy for Rushton? Could such a man be regarded as a friend in the hour of trial? No, no. That dark millionaire rose before my fevered imagination as the evil genius of speculation, a scourge and an abettor, rather than an instrument of good, supplying the means of action, suggesting the temptation, and urging on greedy mortals to self-destruction; while he, calm and unmoved, rode the whirlwind and directed the storm.

But the fever was not yet at its height. It was, in reality, only the commencement of the deluge which was to sweep over the land. The weaker houses naturally showed the first symptoms of the strain. Then the older and more respectable began to tremble for their engagements. Paralyzed by the news which greeted them at every turn, they staggered back from "Change" to their counting-houses with blinded vision and beating hearts,—stupefied like men who had swallowed an opiate, or had been struck on the head with a hammer. Rushton, with compressed lip and firmly-set eye, paced about with a sturdy step, and affected to despise the rumours which touched the credit and honour of some of the oldest and most respectable houses. He compared the anxious crowd of merchants and speculators to a flock of sheep, which communicated their natural fears to each other.

"Pshaw!" said he; "if they would only stand fast and be firm, this crisis will prove but a passing gale, which may indeed shake the edifice, and unroof some of the more dilapidated portions; but it is not the earth-

quake which the terror-stricken fools seem to have dug as a grave for themselves."

Everything that assured language and confident address could effect was tried by Rushton among his friends. He preached up the credit of firms assailed by public opinion. He cried "courage" to some, "shame" to others, and denounced the base designs of the envious few who pined in secret at the success of their neighbours, and now crept out of their holes to cry "wolf," and terrify honest men by reports the most malicious and unfounded.

HARVEST HOME.

THERE is a saying among the good folks of Maythorne, a lovely, secluded, and very rural village on the south coast of England, to the effect that, if a fine day is desired for a particular purpose, it is best to ascertain whether any fête or rejoicing is appointed to take place there at the same time, as the sun, which *always* shines at Maythorne, has a special brilliancy on such occasions.

This almost surpasses Admiral Fitzroy; but as, unfortunately, all the world does not partake in the advantages which an acquaintance with Maythorne and its admiring inhabitants would confer, they must continue to rejoice amid the usual amount of rain, mud, and sunless days, which in England usually accompany our flower-shows, fêtes, or any open-air occasion of especial distinction.

Maythorne, however, proved its right to an assertion of superiority in weather, by the brilliancy of the unclouded morning which ushered in the great event of this last 12th of September, the long-talked-of, the long-anticipated Harvest Home.

Nothing for weeks had been thought of, or talked of, but the attractions, the glories of this coming festival; and for the week preceding, for any one walking about and into the old Saxon church, nothing was to be seen but bales of evergreens, and large sheaves of corn, and bearded oats, in readiness for its decoration; while the young daughters of the clergyman, on whom that graceful and pious duty devolved, forsaking their usual haunts, were only to be met in the lane separating the church from the Rectory grounds, their hands and aprons filled with the choicest and most fragrant flowers, which, carefully cultured, petted, and trained into luxuriant beauty, were now gathered by the fair hands which had reared them, for the same adornment. Standing about, with awe-stricken, round eyes, and chubby arms hidden under their pinafores, were groups of tiny village maidens, watching the progress of the workmen engaged in putting up triumphal arches both in the church and churchyard,—for the good folks of Maythorne did the thing well and handsomely, as was right; and beyond this feeble chronicle, did not the *Sussex Noticer*, that staunch and independent paper, devote two columns to a recital of its well-doings? and for other things that might be omitted, are they not to be found in a corner of that intelligent monthly periodical, the *Maythorne Pioneer*?

Well, then, the sun, that trusted ally, on this 12th day of September, fully warranted the confidence reposed in him, and shone out his brightest, bringing into yet higher loveliness the scene of rural beauty beneath him, darting into the grey old church, and throwing gules of warm, rich light through its emblazoned windows, in which many a fair saint and grizzly martyr glow in gorgeous robes of purple and ruby, touching into life the worn and ancient carvings, the sculptured stones and monumental brasses, seeming to call into a smile the marble effigy of one who, in trunk hose

and ruffled throat, had knelt there since the days of James, and whom the legend beneath him touchingly describes as a "learned and pious gentleman, fearing the Lord all his days, until he fell in a consumption, when hee had completed 25 yeares, and went with joie into his eternal reste;" falling on the thousand branches and green leaves employed in the decoration of the old church, and bringing out into yet more glowing colours the vivid dyes of the choice flowers garlanded among them.

On entering the sacred edifice, the effect was very good, and the young ladies aforesaid deserve most honourable notice for the taste which had been instrumental in obtaining it.

Beneath the arch of the chancel a screen had been erected, composed of a broad arch of ivy leaves, and two smaller of box, which crossed the aisle, on either side of which were screens of laurel, with dahlias of different colours, forming arches on the leaves. At the top of the cross arch ran, in mediæval letters, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." In the centre rose a large sheaf of corn. The whole screen was ornamented with dahlias of different colours, and various kinds of flowers. In the chancel the small pillars were entwined with wreaths of evergreens, mixed with corn and oats. The pillars of the nave were wreathed with green boughs, and peeping out from the carved reading desks were bouquets of rare exotics. Immense trees of fuchsias stood on the altar steps, which were covered with crimson cloth, while vases of choice porcelain, filled with fresh and fragrant flowers, stood on the altar itself.

From the earliest morning on the eventful day the village was astir, and great was the rejoicing at the sight of six splendid horses, each with posies at his head, and a row of silver bells on his collar, which entered the village on their way to join the procession forming at its upper end. Proudly they went along amid the acclamations of the villagers, their silver bells tinkling sweet sounds as they passed.

As time went on, the excitement increased, distant sounds of music were heard, until at last expectation grew into certainty by the appearance foremost in state of the waggon.

This had over it an arch of flowers, evergreens, and corn, and in front the inscription, "Speed the Plough." It was topped by a large crown of dahlias, and drawn by the six horses, with their silver bells and harness covered with flowers. At the head of each horse walked its driver, his hat gaily ornamented with coloured ribbons.

Then came the procession in the following order:—First, a banner, borne by two men, with "Maythorne Harvest Home" in golden letters thereon. This was followed by a band, which, if not that of the Life Guards, did excellent duty in the pleasure it gave. It was followed by a curious and pretty sight; advancing in twos and twos, came what appeared literally a walking procession of wheat, barley, and oats, for the bearers were invisible; tall, tapering poles, tastefully decorated, headed by one taller than the rest, composed entirely of fresh flowers: this was received

with great delight. Then came the banner of the squire, then the committee-men of Maythorne, walking in double file, glancing proudly around, with a satisfied and virtuous air; these were followed by more banners, more wheat, more oats, which were succeeded by a long train of farmers and tradesmen, and the whole closed by the labourers with their wives and families; each person was decorated with a bouquet of wheaten trophies.

They passed along down the quaint old village street, with its old, over-hanging houses, and deep-porched doorways, band playing, streamers flying, bells tinkling, until, after passing through three triumphal arches, the procession, leaving the waggon at the entrance, reached the church, whose peals rang out a welcome. There they were met by the clergy and choir, chanting appropriate verses from the Psalms, and all advanced up the aisle together, arriving at the chancel, each pole of wheat, oats, and flowers entered it, and on the altar steps were placed in stands ready to receive them; the bearers withdrew; and it was really a gratifying and interesting sight,—one mass of the fulness and richness of the earth brought together, and the voices of a grateful people, in thanksgiving and praise, rising up to the All-beneficial Giver!

This duty cheerfully and gratefully performed, the bells pealed out, giving the good news far and wide that “peace was on the earth, and good will to man,” while the procession re-formed in the churchyard, and marched off, preceded by their band, to Maythorne Park, where the hearty and popular squire made all welcome.

Maythorne Park is one of those squirarchial residences that look and feel entirely genial; it could not be described by the epithets grand or magnificent, but by the thoroughly English word,—comfortable.

The mansion itself was of the ugly age of red brick and heavy stone copings, square and formal, but redeemed into almost beauty by a dear little wing at one end, entirely covered with ivy, which seems to have hung itself on to the parent mansion, but which was in reality the remains of the older house, on which red bricks had been grafted. This took off much of the formality; also with time the red hue of the original bricks had mellowed into a warm tint of reddish brown, and the staring white of the stone employed in the heavy architraves and copings had toned down to a greyish hue, so that, though it could not be a county boast for beauty of erection, it warmed the heart with its look of real English home comfort, and seemed to match exactly its hearty, ruddy, jovial master.

In front of the house was a broad terrace, descending by three flights of stone steps into a large lawn, cut into beds of glowing flowers, and interspersed with rustic stands, and baskets filled with geraniums, fuchsias, and roses. A group of oaks at the farther extremity threw a pleasant shade on the seats and resting-places beneath. Beyond this lay the park, and herein was the beauty of the place.

Of considerable extent and ancient growth, modern culture and taste had only assisted in bringing out its natural beauties. Within it were

gentle knolls, clumped with magnificent trees, up whose boughs, rendered fearless by the repose, ran the wild squirrel. There, also, the pride of the county, were two long avenues of old, old oaks, each one of which was a study.

Every now and then was a long, cool vista, inviting from its shade, its verdure, and its soft, mossy, springy turf. Anon came a glade, still, so still and quiet that the footfall, lightly as it fell on the verdant carpet, startled the shy deer, feeding amidst its covert, and with heads erect and soft, yet startled eyes, they gazed around and prepared for a flight.

Here again is a spot of sylvan loveliness, in which the trees, overarching, prevent the too glowing glances of Phœbus from penetrating, who, nevertheless, curious to look into its quiet beauty, woos and kisses their leaves with fond persuading, until they permit him to dance into flickers and wavelets of golden light upon their roots and branches, and cast alternate shadows of glitter and shade on the quiet pathway.

In the large open space of the park was now a scene of festivity, and pleasant was the sight of the long tables, as the happy recipients of the good cheer they held took their places round them. Not mountains, but rocks of beef, roasted and boiled, whole sheep, and pies of all kinds, with kindly-looking brown-baked loaves of an immense size, literally saying, "Come and cut again," filled every spare place; and though the tables did not groan, they *creaked* at the weight of the good things they held. Nor were the wants of thirsty souls forgotten, for at equal distances—and not far apart either—were ranged huge black leathern jacks, full of home brewed, which received the constant, respectful attention of the company. For ornament, in addition to the happy, healthy faces round them, exactly in the centre of the tables stood the large crown of dahlias before mentioned, on which were inscriptions, "God save the Queen," and "Harvest Home."

After the appetites—and such appetites! look on and envy, O ye gourmands!—had been appeased, came the toasts. Cheery and loud rose the voices, in honest loyalty for their good Queen, in hearty good-will for their squire—who, his face beaming with smiles, presided,—and for their kindly and popular vicar. Grace was then said, and the whole company adjourned to another part of the park, where the further amusement of the day was carried on by the commencement of the games, which began with great spirit and glee.

Here was a very good specimen of young agricultural England in these smock-frocked, honest-looking lads; firm, well-built, ruddy and brown, full of life and fun, happy in their life, not certainly to be matched out of England; looking shily often when addressed by "the gentry," but well-mannered, well-spoken lads nevertheless; and their little demure sisters and cousins, with arms folded demurely on apron, and with their deep reverence, yet with a merry sparkle of the eye, showing there was plenty of merriment within, only restrained by the good manners necessary to

show their good teaching, and laughing out happily at a kindly glance from teacher, or well-loved, well-known lady.

Great was the excitement as the men and lads drew up for their various trials of strength. There were flat races, jingling matches, wheeling barrows blindfold, bobbing for rolls dipped in treacle, throwing quoits, running in sacks, and wrestling. Games without number, and apparently without end, and all well contested.

The wrestling was very good, and the two champions who stepped forward for the honours of the day might have been taken as good specimens of English peasantry. Well looking, well made, they approached each other cautiously, and went in vigorously. Both appeared so well and equally matched, that it was difficult to award a preference; and it was only out of interest for a young girl, whose rosy colour had considerably varied when "blue ribbon" went to the bad, that a bystander would have rejoiced at his eventual victory, and becoming the happy possessor of a new hat and a large cheese, which, during the remainder of the day, he carried triumphantly about under one arm, Rosy Face hanging on the other.

In the jingling matches and treacle bobbing, an odd-looking urchin, rejoicing in the cognomen of Pepper, greatly distinguished himself, his saucy, turned-up nose literally turning up everywhere. It is only to be hoped that he, too, had a share in the treacle delicacies of which he became possessor, otherwise it is to be feared Dr. Maplesome, the worthy Galen of Maythorne, would find a serious case on his hands.

In the middle of all this medley of many sounds, loud cheering and much laughter, accompanied by a sudden rush of people to one part of the course, attracts the attention. What is it? With slow and solemn step approach four of the committee-men, bearing something aloft, which, as they advance nearer, turns out to be a cradle, which, with great reverence, they deposit at the winning-post. A consultation takes place among a crowd of women, and presently six youthful-looking candidates come forward; they are all married; they are to run for it; and as they stand in a row, eager and expectant, neatly dressed, healthy and clean, they look very interesting. The signal is given; off they go, amid the cheers of the spectators, giving proof that Sussex is very neat about the ankles, and arriving flushed and breathless at the post. The prize is adjudged to neighbour Green, who, assisted by her husband, carried off the cradle in great triumph, and gave every promise the prize would not be a useless one.

After the games came tea, laid on the same long tables, with abundance of cake, and here assembled the aged and infirm, who had been unable to mix in the noisier sports, and who were specially cared for and tended by the gentle daughters of the squire and their friends, who supplied their wants, and cheered many an old friend and pensioner.

Among them was a hale old fellow, an old Waterloo guardsman, and

though his back was bent and his face one seam of wrinkles, there was yet fire in his eye and energy in his tone, which lit up into light and eagerness when he was accosted by name, and his hand cordially taken by the brother of the noble commander under whom he served in the glorious day gone by. Very happy looked the old soldier, as, erecting himself up like an old war horse who suddenly hears the sound of the trumpet, he gave a military salute to the kind heart and noble man who had so cheered him, and who had left within his clasped hand so substantial a token of his regard.

After the tables were cleared came the sweet sound of the church bells, calling on all who had participated in hearty and innocent amusements of the day, to bring it to a close by a repeated thanksgiving to Him who had given the power to enjoy it. Ladies and peasant maidens, noble men and grey-haired labourers, squire, vicar,—all obeyed the call, and wended their way in groups along the cool park, in which herds of deer were grazing, and the cawing rooks returning homewards, appeared rather disturbed at the quiet of their precincts being invaded by such an unusual multitude. Soon ringing out on the sweet evening-tide was heard the harvest hymn, the sun sank slowly down in crimson and purple dyes over the distant hills, and on the quiet churchyard and fields and paths seemed the shadow of peace ineffable.

Such was the Harvest Home of Maythorne, which recalled the times when England was really "merrie England;" when squire and lady did not disdain to promote, ay, and share the enjoyments of tenants and labourers; when unions were not, and poor laws were unknown. In these simple and unnoticed villages much may yet be found of a real peace on earth, coupled with good-will towards man. The festival of Maythorne is triennial. In the good it does, the kindly feeling it evokes, the innocent amusement it creates, it should better be an annual custom, which all the world might be the better and purer for witnessing.

V. V. V.

MORDRED

BY R. WILLIAMS BUCHANAN.

PART THE FIRST.

"FAREWELL! farewell!"

I softly sigh'd;
Clear as a bell

Her voice replied:
The boughs closed round, the whispering wind dropt low,
And it was eventide.

While dim and gray
Dropt down the night,
Her fair face lay,
Snow-cold, snow-white,
Close to my heart, and, sparkling on her tears,
Glimmer'd a pale starlight.

Under the shade
Of Arthur's Towers,
Within a glade
Of garden bowers,
We linger'd, heart to heart, and the cool air
Was sweet with scent of flowers.

In sweet unrest,
Forlorn and weak,
Upon my breast
She leant her cheek,
Whispering lowly, "Whither dost thou go?"
I frown'd, and did not speak:

For blushful shame
And coward dread,
A face like flame,
A heart like lead,
Oppress'd me, and I shudder'd to behold
The faith from which I fled.

I could not dare
To tell a thing
So sweet, so fair,
So suffering,
That a dark demon urged me on to join
Against the blameless king;

That, spite of shame
 And shame's award,
 A blacken'd name,
 A recreant sword,
 My soul had leagued with Lancelot's red powers
 Against my sovereign lord.

Than falsehood she
 Was fairer far,—
 Fairer to me
 Than spirits are ;
 And on the tumbled waters of my life
 She glimmer'd like a star.

But like a cloud
 Rose, far away,
 The dark and proud
 Rebel array,
 And over bloody graves to Camelot
 It redden'd day by day.

And I was drawn,
 As by a chain,
 By stealth to pawn
 Body and brain,
 Turn traitor to my liege, and to a love
 Sweet and without a stain.

Her beauty chid
 My shame and fear :
 How could I bid
 A thing so dear
 Fly from her loyal sweetness, peace, and truth,
 For falsehood sad and sere ?

“ Farewell ! ” I cried,
 With heart wrung dry,—
 The black wind sigh'd
 Mournfully by.
 And “ When wilt thou return ? ” she whisper'd low—
 I answer'd with a lie.

With lips like ice,
 And pulses hot,
 I kiss'd her thrice,
 And waited not,
 But tore myself away, and through deep night
 Rode swift from Camelot.

By gleaming Usk
 Fell branches green,
 And through the dusk,
 In silver sheen,
 I saw the river glimmer to the hills,
 With Arthur's Towers between.

And salt, salt tears
 Flash'd large and fell,
 And in mine ears
 "Farewell! farewell!"
 Rang as a voice from some diviner life,
 And warn'd me like a knell.

But blind to sight,
 To feeling dead,
 Along the night
 Swiftly I fled,
 Till on the ledges of the hills I saw
 The rebel watch-fires red.

PART THE SECOND.

Through summer leas,
 Yellow with gold,
 'Neath shady trees,
 The river roll'd,
 And on its rush-fringed banks to Camelot
 Came lances manifold.

With fire and sword
 We swept along,
 A traitor horde,
 A warlike throng,
 And in our track the many hamlets mourn'd,
 For rapine, blood, and wrong.

MORDRED.

Fairest of all,
And sinfullest,
Towering tall
Above the rest,
Upon a coal-black steed rode Lancelot,
In sombre armour drest ;

With form that stoop'd,
And unkempt beard,
A brow that droop'd
O'er lips that sneer'd,—
But the mere meekness of his henchman's eye
Seem'd something that he fear'd.

Forward we rode
'Neath branches green,
By Usk that flow'd
In silver sheen,
Until the river glimmer'd to the hills,
With Arthur's Towers between,

The dewy mist
Of morn upwound ;
And ere we wist,
A trumpet sound
Spake like a human cry ; and, lo, the boughs
Grew populous around.

And loudly then
Arose the shout
Of armèd men
And henchmen stout,
Who sprang upon us like a storm, and whirl'd
Rude swords around about.

But swift as wind
We struggled through,
And left behind
That hireling crew ;
While, turning at a cry, our meanest horse
Assail'd them, and they flew.

When brightly o'er us
The morning flush'd,
And far before us,
To meet us, rush'd
The flower of loyal steedsmen—Lancelot
Gript his great sword, but blush'd.

The greenwood rang
Again, again,
Till with a clang,
On the green plain,
We struck the foe, with hoofs that sparkled fire,
And blows that fell like rain.

The shrill death-cry
Arose aloud.
Tumultuously,
In a pale cloud
Of fiery dust, we eddied to and fro—
A fierce and shrieking crowd.

With deafen'd ears,
And blood-blurr'd sight,
Amid my peers
I strove in fight,
Till, hurl'd apart, I singled out for death
A strange and visor'd knight.

For, in a place
Removed, we came
Full face to face
With hearts of flame,
And through his mask of mail he breathed in scorn
My loyal lady's name.

Then "Yield!" I cried,
With wrath grown higher;
But he defied
My murderous ire:—
I made a burning circle of my sword,
And smote him down in fire!

With this red brand
 His helm I clove,
 And, sword in hand,
 I strode above
 His breast, and drew his visor down—and lo!
 My loyal lady-love!

Pale as the moon
 On Snowdon's crest,
 In a cold swoon
 She lay at rest;
 And as I loosed her helm, her yellow hair
 Fell, blood-stain'd, on her breast.

Then, with low sighs,
 Quick breath she drew,
 And, opening eyes
 Of fading blue,
 She look'd upon me; and I moan'd aloud
 With heart as weak as dew.

Her pale lips stirr'd
 Without a sound;
 Without a word
 She gazed around;
 And then she smiled, as only Love can smile
 When Love is blest and crown'd!

And with a shriek
 I raised her head;
 And, cold and meek,
 Apparellèd
 In the new mystery of diviner life,
 She moan'd, and softly said,—

“From sorrow past
 Come peace and gain;
 And, love, at last
 We meet again.—
 I die, content with this poor blood to show
 Your honour its one stain.

“ For when you fled
 With shame-flush'd face,
 To honour dead,
 And dead to grace,
 I arm'd my woman's limbs at dead of night,
 And rose and took your place.

“ Wherefore, in ruth,
 I pay for thee
 The love, the truth,
 The loyalty
 Which wait on noble deeds, and which you owed
 To Heaven, the King, and me !

“ To sweeter climes
 Of love I fly ;
 Sweet music chimes
 Through earth and sky.—
 O Mordred, take me softly in your arms,
 And kiss me ere I die !

“ Farewell ! farewell ! ”
 She softly sigh'd ;
 And, like a knell,
 My heart replied.
 Then, in her eyes, I broke my sword in twain,
 And kiss'd her, and she died.

PAIN.

"And the poor beetle that we tread upon,
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great
As when a giant dies!"

POETRY is, in so many cases, only the shadow of a fact onward advancing to revelation, that we are commonly prone to overlook exceptions. Exceptions, nevertheless, there are, and amongst the number of such, few more remarkable or less to be regretted than that which physiology supplies to the foregoing quotation. If the sweet bard of Avon's acquaintance with neurology were comparable to his deep knowledge of human nature, what a sad torture-chamber would be this world of ours; societies for preventing cruelty to animals notwithstanding! To reflect upon the bruised and lacerated things of life that we encounter daily; animated beings mangled out of shape; worms down-trodden and moths incremated: all this is harrowing to a sensitive mind yielding full faith to Shakspeare. Worse still about the oysters, if the poet's neurology be sound. A cold thrill of horror shoots through the frame, and the heart beats turbulently, when imagination, poet-led, conjures up memories of innocent natives mercilessly rent in twain, and swallowed quivering! If Shakspeare be right, then, turn the eye where we will, the horror of suffering disclosed is almost too much for tranquil contemplation. The great book of nature, made patent to our gaze, seems then but as the record of some blood-stained executioner. Whatever harmony of creation we had brought the mind to believe in is forthwith quelled in the discord amidst the harsh tones of which a taunting spirit of evil seemes to whisper, "Are these the ways of a beneficent God?" Vanish the harrowing picture from the mind, with all its suggestions of evil!—it is not true. No physiological tenet can be more certain than that of the correlation between degree of impressional sensibility and development of the nervous system. To establish an identity of suffering as between man, in whom the nervous system is wrought out to the highest point of elaboration, and the polyp tribe, in which not even nerve fibres, far less anything comparable to a brain, has ever been discovered, is repugnant to every principle of anatomy and physiology; and so in a minor degree, between man at the very summit of creation, and animals, though lower than himself, not so far down in the scale of life as polyps.

Striving to arrive at fixed conclusions relative to pain by a classification of ideas, the division between mental and bodily pain is first suggested. Starting from this point, the conclusion will soon be manifest that mental pain must necessarily be proportionate to the mental or intellectual capacity of an animal: whence it follows that humanity, ranging high above aught else of animated life in mental attributes, if not wholly separated by a

demarcation of kind, must retain to itself pre-eminently, if not exclusively, the attribute of being susceptible to mental pain. Of this fact the poet reveals a just conception :—

“The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play ?
Pleased to the last, he crops the flowery food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.”

That the torture of anticipation cannot be felt by any animal to the extent that it afflicts humanity, is a proposition based on evidence more secure than a poet's dream, or metaphysician's abstraction. It is testified alike by common experience and the records of physiology. Much as we all endeavour to avoid pain, the capacity for experiencing it is undoubtedly a privilege ; and, emotional or mental pain being in question, a very noble privilege. Without the capacity to suffer pain, a creature would be dead to the corresponding sense of pleasure. As there is no such entity as independent positive heat, or independent positive cold, neither do such entities exist as independent positive pleasure and pain respectively. Grade by grade, each condition verges into the other imperceptibly ; and, as in physical science, no dogma is more universally accepted than the correspondence and mutuality of action and reaction, so in like manner, either sensationally or intellectually, every pleasure has its obverse, in some attendant pain. The subject of moral or intellectual pleasure and pain does not admit of being much discussed without speedily bearing the mind away into regions of metaphysical speculation. Vainly shall we scrutinize the nervous system for any save the most vague indications to bear upon this topic of inquiry. But physical pleasure and its correlative are topics concerning which the scalpel and the microscope proffer good aid. Let us see, then, to what extent the much-quoted expression of our immortal bard justifies its teaching. The sentient apparatus of man and animals is known to be the nervous system. Of this there can be no doubt, inasmuch as various natural casualties, added to experience gleaned from numerous and cruel experiments, supply the necessary demonstration. Belonging to the first class of evidence, the well-known fact may be cited of an inferior extremity “gone to sleep,” to use the common expression. A great nerve trunk—the sciatic—passing to its destination over a bony ridge, is occasionally compressed against that ridge by sitting upon a hard chair, numbness being the result. Experimentally, similar evidence of the relation between a nerve and sensation is supplied by the following case. When the painful affection, *tic-doloureux*, is experienced locally, an extreme, though effectual means of curing it consists in dissecting down upon and dividing the particular nerve trunk which, ramifying farther on, is distributed to the part. That the nerves minister to sensation by conveyance of impressions is undoubted ; but concerning the *rationale* of this ministration nothing whatever is known. At a particular epoch in the history of physiology, it was

the fashion to theorize upon the mechanism of nervous agency; but physiologists in despair have long abandoned this field of investigation. The term "nervous fluid" is the remnant of a particular theory, wholly devoid of support. It has been a favourite idea, ever since the codification of electrical facts into a science, that some kind of similarity, if not actual identity, existed between nervous force and electricity. Mankind have been ever prone to establish what musicians term a wolf in their philosophy:—to cast all the imperfections of their reason brought to bear upon any particular subject into one corner; to the end that their science might appear more correct. By giving currency to the expression, "nervous fluid," it might be thought, on a superficial view of the case, that an analogy had been established, and a finality of exposition achieved. Unfortunately, however, for the upholders of a nervous fluid, it so happens that the tendency of all modern electrical investigation is adverse to the supposition that any electric fluid exists. If the question be demanded of electricians to what agency they would refer their phenomena,—the theory of a fluid being abandoned,—being less arrogant than of yore, they will no longer hesitate to aver their absolute ignorance of the matter. Amongst the generalizations of physical science, one of the most interesting and best established is the correlation subsisting between the physical forces. Thus, heat may be transmuted into magnetism and electricity; and either may be considered as a function of chemical affinity. Starting from deduction, the vague idea has presented itself to certain minds, that nervous power, too, may be a function in the correlative series. At present the speculation is no better than a dream, and probably is utterly beyond the scope of man's investigation.

Passing from speculation on finite causes to visible and palpable manifestations, let us take a glance at the composition and arrangement of nervous matter. Different nerves have different specialities, both of colour and of texture; but in a general way nerves may be compared, their material regarded, to the brain or spinal marrow of such animals as have brains and spinal marrows, namely, the Vertebrata. The expression "neurine" is employed by physiologists to indicate nerve and brain matter, wherever it may be found, and under every form it may assume. Proportionately to the value of any particular organ or organization, is the care exercised by ever-provident nature to keep it out of harm's way; and starting from this point of contemplation, one cannot fail to be impressed with the elaborate safeguards supplied by nature for protecting the brain and nervous systems generally, of man and other animals of the vertebrate division. Commencing with the brain, the elaborate bony protection afforded by the skull must, to some extent, be evident at a first glance, though the full defensive strength afforded by the cranium to its precious contents can only be appreciated adequately by the anatomist. The brain may be said to have a defensive armour, comparable to that of one of our mail-clad ships; only, as might have been anticipated—Nature being the architect,—

vastly more elaborate and efficient. The problem set to herself by Nature—if the expression be permissible—in shielding the brain, was far less embarrassing, the difficulties to be overcome far less considerable, than such as she had to encounter in affording adequate protection to that prolongation of the brain (as anatomically, though not physiologically, it may be called), the spinal marrow. Inasmuch as the necks and trunks of vertebrate animals could not have been rigid, so, to be in accord with the conditions of existence under which we find them, provision had to be made for the numerous bendings of the neck and trunk that are so frequently required. Had the spinal cord gone unprotected to its destination, then difficulty, speaking in a human sense, there would have been none. Inasmuch, however, as the spinal chord is at least of no less importance than the brain, therefore it had to be protected no less effectually; sufficient play of motion being permitted notwithstanding.

How beautifully the indication has been carried out, many common movements to which each of us is subject—movements performed without difficulty, and which, from their very commonness, excite no wonder—suffice to make known; but the full extent of the motion to which the spinal chord may, without injury, be subjected in human individuals, can best be seen in the performance of acrobats. Thus recently, an individual, engaged at a place of public amusement in this metropolis, performed the surprising feat of eating bread stuck upon a spur attached to his heel: not (though the performance, even in this case, would have seemed difficult) by lifting his foot to the mouth in front, but by passing the heel upwards and backwards over the corresponding shoulder. The amount of posterior flexion to which the spine must have been subjected may be readily imagined. Evening after evening he continued to perform the feat, nevertheless, with complete impunity: seemingly, too, without embarrassment. Such a degree of spinal mobility, though unusual in man, is utterly transcended by the facile bending and coiling of serpents; especially boas and pythons. These animals kill their prey by compression, as is well known; the entire serpent body being made to assume for the occasion the physical characteristic of a rope.

Although nerves are concerned in propagating sensations, they have yet other offices, as theory, *à priori*, indicates, and experiment, *à posteriori*, makes known. Foremost of these is motion; which may be well regarded as the effect, sensation being the cause. Metaphysically scrutinized, the correlation which subsists between sensation and motion may be illustrated thus:—A finger being pricked, a sensation of pain is transmitted to the sensorium; when from the latter the command goes forth, "That the finger do move away." The question next to arise is as to the kind of order. What dictates the order? Is it volition, or something independent of volition? Undoubtedly in the human being volition, otherwise reason, is one source of the mandate at least; but, *à priori*, contemplation and experiment alike lead us to believe that reason is not the only source.

Reason—volition—there can be none in the case of a baby who withdraws a finger from a pricking pin: in this case, at least, the motion must be determined by some cause independent of the will. Springing out of considerations based upon the sequence of motion to an external impression, under circumstances of the absence of will, came a remarkable discovery of the late Dr. Marshall Hall—the discoverer of what he called, and of what is now commonly denominated, the reflex nervous function. The propriety of the term “reflex” thus applied will be obvious on considering the relations of this function as manifested by the following examples. Suddenly cold water is dashed upon the chest of a sleeper, or a lump of ice is applied. Immediately—seconds before awakening; indeed, the individual operated upon may not awake—a convulsive motion of the respiratory muscles takes place, followed by a strong spasmodic inspiration. Volition could not have determined this spasmodic breathing. Nevertheless it was brought about, in deference to some nervous command, propagated from some nervous centre; the command following a monition conveyed to the centre from without: very properly, then, may such an influence be said to be “reflected.” Undoubtedly pain is a monitor of danger imminent; and so careful is Nature that her beautiful organisms shall not go unprotected amidst the shocks and turmoil incident to life, that, long before reason has dawned, the prompt guardianship of the reflex function is given:—given probably more acute and vigorous to infancy than at future periods of life, when co-existent with reason, and volition the offspring of reason. It is only for lack of applying the mind to contemplate this interesting subject, that many common examples of the reflex function coming into play do not present themselves. How wholly beside and beyond the will is sneezing, for instance! The stage mimic, who readily extemporizes a cough or a sob, who can even simulate the holy mystery of tears, finds it almost beyond the tethering strings of art to get up a satisfactory sneeze. On sufficient provocation, nevertheless, an individual sneezes readily: a pinch of snuff to a nose unaccustomed, or a sprinkling of cayenne to the most obdurate proboscis, and then follows a sneeze in the majesty of its perfection.

Let us consider the philosophy of sneezing; it has great points of interest, and is worthy of contemplation. A sneeze is a common-sense attempt, by nature established, to get rid, by a gush of air mechanically emitted through the nose, of some offending substance. To this end she calls into spasmodic action the various muscles—but chiefly the diaphragm—that are concerned in the act of expiration. Nobody can will a sneeze: reason—volition—has nothing to do with it. The result, being wholly independent of reason, is due to the reflex nervous function. Besides the cerebro-spinal nervous system, there is, in the higher animals at least, another—the great sympathetic system. Perhaps, in respect of this, one had better state that its exact function is not known. From anatomical scrutiny of the parts supplied by it, some general notions may

be deduced of the offices this system of nerves has to perform ; but they are *very* general notions. Sympathetic nerve filaments are chiefly distributed to the organs of assimilation,—such as the stomach, heart, liver, &c. ; whence the inference dawns that the great sympathetic system ministers in some way to the assimilative or organic functions ; and hence the designation of Bichat, “ *Nerfs de la vie organique*.” This knowledge is vague, as must be confessed ; but none more positive is forthcoming. Probably the sympathetic nerve is in no way concerned in the transmission of sensations ; which postulate granted, it cannot be a medium for the conveyance of pain. The anatomical demonstration is, however, not clear ; seeing that sympathetic nervous filaments, and cerebro-spinal nervous filaments, are intimately mingled. Evidence, however, is forthcoming to the following extent :—Such organs as are most exclusively supplied with nerves from the sympathetic centre, are amenable to pain in the least degree. The heart is a notable example of this ;—an organ to wound which seriously is inevitable death, though the heart may be affected by serious local disease without begetting a sensation of local pain. It is impossible to contemplate the various limitations imposed by nature on the volition of animals in relation to motion, without being forcibly struck with the evidence of design. To move a leg or an arm, for instance, is within the competence of any sane and sound adult, as an act of pure volition. These limbs may, however, be moved, apart from volition, by the influence of reflex nervous energy, as we have seen. The two motive energies are so mingled, that to discriminate between the one and the other needs some analysis. In the performance of respiration the divaricating line between volition and reflex action becomes more sharply defined. Within certain limits of time, an individual may breathe, or may refrain from breathing, just as he wills to do ; the reflex mandate being subjected to control, or absolutely dominated. Need of breathing, however, at length becomes absolute. A poisonous gas—carbonic acid—accumulates in the lungs, and must be emitted. Acting as a stimulus, this poisonous gas affects outlying branches of the reflex system of nerves ; thereupon a message—so to speak—is conveyed to the centre of reflex force, and a mandate reflected back to the organs of respiration, “ That breath be expelled,” thus demonstrating that, beyond a certain limit, breathing ceases to be an act of volition.

Take, now, the case of the heart, which, from the cradle to the grave, pulsates in one unceasing throb : beating the funeral march, as Longfellow so happily expresses it. The heart, as we all know, is not amenable to volition in any degree. Even the reflex system is considered by nature to have more discretionary power than comports with the necessities of the case ; hence the heart is placed almost wholly under the influence of the great sympathetic nervous centre. The anatomy of nerves must often be qualified by the words “ nearly ” and “ almost,” because of the difficulty of discovering the actual component parts of nervous trunks. Certain nerve filaments are seen on dissection, and each receives a certain name. This

sort of nomenclature, though a necessity, is apt to beget false notions. Each nerve, trunk, or filament, should properly be regarded as an aggregate of filaments travelling together, as if for the sake of convenience. In this way, filaments of sensation, common and special—of volition, of reflex and sympathetic agency, may all be commingled.

The care which nature has taken of the brain and spinal marrow of vertebrate animals has already been pointed out. Descending lower in creation, no such elaborate provision is furnished: a circumstance which, taken conjunctively with the less complex nature of the nervous system as revealed by dissection, points to the existence of a lower sensorial capability. In man and the other vertebrata, neurose or nervous matter is aggregated into masses and filaments, as we have seen; the latter constituting nerves. A similar aggregation is found low down in the scale of animated creation; but when we come to beings still recognized as animals, but still very low in the scale of animalization, the nervous matter is found distributed without local aggregation, in the form of isolated dots. *A priori*, then, it might have been inferred that the capacity for pain possessed by such creatures as polyps and sponges is of the slightest, if any; and, *à posteriori*, such appears to be the result of experimental demonstration. Not so low as polyps, but amongst the molluscs, are our friends, the oysters; and, adverting to them, we have to deal with the momentous question, whether they suffer pain—or, plainer, whether they are hurt when opened and swallowed alive? Conceding that the question is one of degree, inasmuch as oysters do possess a system of nervous aggregation, though a remarkably simple one, still the solacing conclusion may be arrived at, that the degree of pain inflicted is trivial, if any. Thought of it need not trouble either the conscience or the digestion of the most delicately sensitive. Anatomy and physiology lend no countenance to the plea, if ever advanced, of giving oysters the benefit of the act for prevention of cruelty to animals.

Tyrants in every age, and under every régime, whether of politics or religion, have cherished the power of inflicting pain as one of their highest prerogatives. Fire, the pulley, lacerations by cold steel or glowing iron, boiling, broiling, forced wakefulness, repletion by cold water,—such are only a few of the devices imagined by tyrants in their ferocity to torture their fellow-beings: details sickening to read of or hear spoken,—racks of agony, doubtless, to the sufferers; but the physiologist will entertain little doubt—what consolation!—that torture-devising tyrants have never been able to compass a tithe of the suffering they imagined in their hearts. The nervous system breaks down at a certain point, and syncope or fainting, ending, if the læsion be extreme, in death, imposes a finality to suffering. The physiologist will incline to the solacing belief, that for any amount of agony ever inflicted by fire, the rack, or other fell device of tyrants gone rabid, an amount equal at least has been inflicted humanely in the exercise of operative surgery. However malevolent a tyrant may have been, the

presumption is, that in decreeing torture he would have desired that, if possible, the amount of punishment should be accurately defined. Least of all would one have expected to discover any failure of limitations and definitions in this respect, in the wording of a penal British act of parliament. Nevertheless, a remarkable instance to the contrary is found in an act of parliament, passed in the reign of Henry VIII.; the act imposing the penalty of boiling alive on malefactors convicted of poisoning. The statute was passed to meet the case of one Rouse, cook to Henry VIII.; who, having committed murder by poison administered in soup, was discovered, tried, and convicted. Strangely enough, the act fails to state the precise manner in which the boiling should be conducted: whether the culprit should be cooked boiled beef fashion or lobster fashion; in other words, whether immersed in cold water and warmed up, or plunged into water already boiling. This is no unimportant matter. Two modes of death are respectively indicated: one replete with torture as well might be; the other, about the easiest.

Scanning the records of the torture chamber, the physiologist cannot fail to be struck with the circumstance that tyrants have frequently been disappointed in the application of their racks. The amount of pain caused has in many, perhaps most cases, been seemingly incommensurate with the torture applied. No persons were better aware of the fact than the executioners themselves; and they explained the matter by referring the torpid sensation to the possession of some sort of amulet. Actuated by this notion, Bodin, and others learned in the ways of inflicting agony, insisted on the necessity of shaving a witch close to the skin with a sharp razor, before subjecting her to the rack, lest some amulet against pain might be concealed amidst her hair. So insensible to pain were these poor old women occasionally, that, according to Bodin, almost the only torture at all times reliable, was that caused by thrusting a sharp instrument up under the nails. Unquestionably there is no correspondence between the amount of physical pain and the surface extent of injuries. Burns and scalds illustrate this. If a comparatively small surface of the body be burnt or scalded, the resulting pain is far more acute than when much larger surfaces are implicated. The common effect, indeed, of an extensive scald or burn is to induce profound sleep. Pain in that case there may be none: a circumstance, however, which is an index of extreme danger. The capacity of enduring physical pain, or rather, probably, the capability of experiencing physical pain, differs amazingly in different races and different individuals of the same race. The stolid indifference of a North American Indian under torture is too well known to need comment; and individuals of the Malay and Mongolian races are not less insensible. When first the Dutch began to colonize their possessions in the Indian Archipelago, they practised impalement to a frightful extent; and attempted to justify the horror on the plea that the Malays heeded no milder form of execution. The operation was performed with

great refinement of cruelty, a spike being driven longitudinally through the whole extent of the dorsal muscles. Seemingly, no torture more horrible could be devised; nevertheless, from circumstantial accounts which I have seen printed, the suffering inflicted did not suffice to quell the appetite for eating and drinking. Impaled criminals are represented as begging food and drink, from passers by.

Even though the very aim of these remarks is to banish the notion commonly prevalent that the nervous system of the inferior animals is no less impressible to pain than that of man; and that even in respect of man, the pain he feels, or can feel, is less grave than torturers have imagined; it nevertheless is not agreeable to linger over the category of illustrations to which our demonstration would lead us. Regarded as an infliction within the power of man to compass, and creatures lower in the scale of creation than man, pain is one of the things that are prone at a first glance to suggest doubts as to the Creator's beneficence. So soon, however, as we come, through the teaching of anatomy and physiology, to regard it as a watchful monitor, ever prompting to the safety of those exquisite machines of life the Creator has made; holding out terrors in threatening guise, yet never inflicting them to the uttermost;—so soon as we discern that the tyrant's power of pain infliction is limited; the sentient nerve-work, wearied under the charge of bearing impressions of danger, which volition can no longer avert, at length refusing to act;—then it is that pain no longer seems an unholy spirit of evil, but a guardian angel to admonish, succour, and preserve.

J. SCOFFERN, M.B.

SECRETS OF MY OFFICE

BY A BILL-BROKER.

PART VIII.—PAUL ARNOLD.

IN a previous chapter I have enunciated some general rules by which, in my judgment, bill-brokers ought to conduct their business. I will now submit one of paramount importance to merchants and traders who require discounts. It is this: Always, if possible, take your bills to men possessed of abundant means. If a bill-broker has a capital of, say, one hundred thousand pounds, he will not, if he knows his business, invest more than seventy thousand in discounts. The remaining thirty thousand he will invest in securities bearing interest and immediately realizable, such as exchequer bills: with such a margin as that he will not be compelled, in self-defence, should he meet with a run of heavy losses, as sometimes happens, to refuse a reasonable accommodation, as to time, to a respectable customer, when there is no real risk in doing so. For this well-understood reason it is that prudent tradesmen, who have barely sufficient capital, prefer to open an account—a discounting account—with a firm whose exclusive business is discounting, than with a bank, which always acts by one unbending rule. The same or worse mischief often results from dealing with a bill-broker who trades to the extent of his means, often with borrowed money at call. If a temporary push comes,—you pushed, himself pushed, or likely to be,—he must enforce immediate payment; and ruin, which a short respite might have averted, is often the consequence. But it may be asked, How is the solvent but struggling tradesman to ascertain which bill-discounter trades within or fully up to his means? There is a rough but fairly accurate rule by which he may guide himself. The reputation of a money-dealing firm is widely known; and if they be men of sharp practice, as it is called, who employ a sharp attorney; who, if there are half a dozen names on the back of a returned bill, forthwith issue six writs, rely upon it that the screw is being applied to the sharp firm as well as to their customers. They have no *power* to act in a wisely considerate manner; they *want* the money, and will have it if it is to be had. One example is of more effect than twenty precepts. I give a striking one.

Several of our clerks were the sons of respectable tradesmen, with whom we might have done business but for a determination we had formed never to have money-dealings with a relative of any one in our employ. If this rule could have been relaxed, it would have been in the case of John Arnold, a wholesale woollen-draper. His son, Paul Arnold, had been with us thirteen years—from the age of ten to twenty-three. He was one of our steadiest, most reliable clerks; excellent arithmetician; admirable, dexterous penman. In short, he was a pattern to every one similarly employed. Paul was a great favourite of mine; and I especially

liked him for the combination of iron firmness of will with almost girlish tenderness of heart, which characterized him. He grew to be a fine young man, and would, I prophesied, make swift, steady way in the world.

When Paul came to us, his father was in but a minor way of business ; but being an active, enterprising man, he prospered rapidly—pushed his trade at perhaps too fast a pace. “ He made haste to be rich,” which is always dangerous. He was, however, helped with two moderate legacies, and by the time Paul reached his twenty-first birthday, boasted of being a ten thousand pounds man,—perhaps not more than an ordinary exaggeration. He was then desirous of Paul’s assistance, and it was only by doubling the young man’s salary, and because he himself preferred to remain in the office, that we retained him for the next two years. At the expiration of that time he left us, and undertook the management of his father’s books.

John Arnold had for several years discounted his trade acceptances with Stephen Cullen, one of those men who, in their eagerness to extend their transactions, keep not only the whole of their own capital constantly afloat in paper, presentable at fixed dates, but borrow largely at call—and, therefore, at low interest—for the same purpose. To my own knowledge, he at one time held ten thousand pounds of borrowed money at call. I should not have sat very comfortably in my office chair with such a sword of Damocles as that suspended over my head.

Cullen had always eagerly received Arnold’s trade-paper, for the excellent reason that there was no better of the kind in the market, and things went on smoothly enough till the spring of 1839. A portion of one of the legacies that had fallen to John Arnold consisted of a large plot of building land at Islington, where, or about where, Cloudesley Square and Cloudesley Street now stand. The unhappy idea of building thereon seized and possessed Arnold. Not that the project was in itself an unwise one, as time has proved ; but it was supremely unwise for him to engage in it, who knew as much about building as I do ; and forasmuch that the woollen-drapery business required every shilling of his capital and every hour of his time. I tried to dissuade him from venturing upon such a speculation ; so did his son. We advised in vain. Nay, so sanguine was he of achieving a great success, that he seriously contemplated giving up, after two or three years at most, the city business to his son, retaining only a sleeping share therein, and retiring with his daughter, a comely girl, five years her brother’s junior, to the Islington “ estate,” freed from the cares and trammels of business.

Some twenty houses were contracted for, and commenced forthwith ; and before the carcasses were completed, John Arnold had borrowed two thousand pounds on his own note of hand, payable at sight, from Cullen. The *understanding* was, that the note was to be renewed as long as Arnold required the loan. This transaction was not made known to the son.

Meantime Paul was compensating, by untiring assiduity and attention

to business, for his father's neglect thereof. He had also formed a fervent attachment to a Miss Baines, only daughter of a retail draper, in an extensive way of business. Both fathers—and both were widowers—approved of the match, and the wedding-day was fixed. Paul was to have a half-share in the woollen-drapery concern; and the young lady's dowry was to be two thousand pounds, paid down. At her father's death she would inherit largely.

Upon the God-speed of this arrangement came the bankruptcy of a short-lived tailor and a West-end draper, who together were indebted to John Arnold to the extent of about seventeen hundred pounds, for nearly the whole of which they had given notes of hand. Those notes of hand Cullen had discounted. Just then, too, several heavy acceptances of John Arnold's own, given to manufacturers in the North, were falling due. Arnold pleaded this last circumstance as an excuse for not immediately taking up the dishonoured notes of the bankrupts. He could not have done a more unwise thing. Cullen, perhaps really alarmed, immediately turned round upon him, and insisted upon payment, not only of the dishonoured bills, but of the two thousand pounds he had lent Arnold. The woollen-draper was thunderstruck, and immediately sought counsel of his son, who for the first time heard of the two thousand pounds. There was, however, no real cause for alarm. Paul, by his admirably kept books, proved beyond doubt that, supposing the Islington property not to be worth one farthing, there was a large surplus after every debt was paid; and that in a month, at the farthest, every claim, including the two thousand pounds, could be easily met. The truth was, that I knew how Stephen Cullen was situated pretty nearly as well as he did himself; and I knew that just then he was at his wits' end to save his own credit, a man whose money he made use of having given notice that he must have five thousand pounds within a week. Without Arnold's debt the bill-broker could not make up the amount, and he determined to have it. That, however, required some management; so he got hold of John Arnold, who was well-nigh frightened to death, and threatened to make him bankrupt, unless he would consent to give a warrant of attorney for the whole sum, about three thousand five hundred pounds;—a warrant of attorney is an instrument empowering the creditor to sign judgment and issue execution without notice to the debtor;—Cullen faithfully promising that, if he would do so, no step should be taken in virtue of the warrant of attorney till the month stipulated for by Paul had expired. He was only desirous that no other creditor should come in before him. John Arnold weakly signed his *death-warrant*, as it proved.

I have no doubt that Stephen Cullen felt positive the money would be immediately forthcoming when it was found he had proceeded to extremities. He had no wish to ruin his old customer, but was compelled to save himself. He believed—such was my well-known confidence in and respect for Paul Arnold—that, upon ascertaining the really sound state of his father's

affairs, I should have advanced the required sum. I would, no question, have done so, but I was unfortunately absent in Germany, and my partners declined to act without my concurrence.

Paul Arnold, who had not heard of the warrant of attorney, was sitting at dessert with his sister, sweetheart, her father, and about half a dozen friends who had dined with them. There had been some arrangements concluded in the morning concerning the wedding, and they were all going to the theatre in the evening, when in walked the sheriff's officers, with an execution for £3,500, exclusive of costs.

The dismay, confused and immediate breaking up of the gay company, must be left to the reader's imagination. John Arnold himself was not present. He was at Islington, superintending his building operations. As soon as Paul clearly comprehended what had befallen, he ran off to our office. I had left for Germany only the day before, and, as I have said, my partners declined to interfere.

The news that an execution was in John Arnold's premises for thousands of pounds flew like wildfire, and before noon the next day, Arnold, in his terror and distraction having afforded the opportunity by committing an act of bankruptcy,—causing himself to be denied to a creditor,—a docquet was struck, a fiat issued, and the once well reputed name of John Arnold, woollen-draper, figured in the *Gazette*. I read it to my unbounded astonishment in the *Times* at Frankfort. In proof of the perfect solvency of the unfortunate man, it is sufficient to say that, after enormous law and other expenses had been incurred—the property at Islington sold under the hammer for a song—the very large woollen-drapery stock disposed of at an immense sacrifice, every creditor was paid seventeen shillings and sixpence in the pound!

John Arnold surrendered to a more tremendous tribunal than the Bankruptcy Court. He was found hanging from one of the rafters of his Islington houses—dead—cold.

The ruin of the family was complete—total. Mr. Baines, which we can hardly feel surprised at, peremptorily annulled the engagement between his daughter and Paul Arnold. The unfortunate young man could not bear up against this last stroke. Brain fever came on, and it was many weeks before he could walk abroad. Whilst he was still suffering,—weak as a little child, had urgent need of her sympathy, her prudence,—his sister, a vain, heartless girl, left her now wretched home in the company of a villain.

All this moral and material ruin Paul Arnold, in the rage and bitterness of his heart, attributed to Cullen; and we shall see with what remorseless energy of hate he pursued and finally came up with his destroyer. Now I, on behalf of my "order," emphatically protest against the absurd conclusion arrived at by Paul Arnold. Men are only morally responsible for the legitimate, natural consequences of their acts, not for possible results which they never contemplated. Cullen behaved harshly, meanly, deceitfully towards John Arnold—goaded into doing so mainly, I

repeat, by the instinct of self-preservation; yet, though he had determined to ruthlessly wield the arm of the law to get back his money in as short a time as possible, and must have been aware that to so act *might* plunge his debtor into the gulf of bankruptcy, he could not have anticipated that John Arnold would hang himself, should he enforce his warrant of attorney. It was supremely unjust, therefore, to hold him accountable, as Paul Arnold did, for that melancholy occurrence. It would be a pretty state of things if an honest creditor, appealing to the law for the recovery of his own, were to be regarded as a moral murderer, because by reason of being sued for a just debt the debtor chose to hang, drown, or pistol himself! And yet that utterly illogical, unjust sentiment *does* float loosely upon the surface of "opinion."

My protest against Paul's notions of criminal responsibility done, I proceed, guided by his own ample, exultant confession, to relate how he carried them out.

When pronounced convalescent, and sufficiently re-established in strength to go for a while into the country, the more speedily to recover his health, he found himself in possession of something over one hundred pounds in cash. One idea already possessed, dominated him,—to be thoroughly revenged upon Stephen Cullen; not by such poor vengeance as a duel, supposing they had both belonged to a class of society to which opinion gave a right—assigned it as a duty—to appeal for justice, when law was powerless, to that sanguinary mode of redress. His hope, his settled purpose, was to accomplish the ruin of Stephen Cullen; to bring him and his daughter, of whom the Lothbury bill-broker was inordinately fond and proud, to poverty—destitution—worse, if worse might be. How to arrive at that consummation was a problem difficult to solve; but he doubted not that, by keeping the one purpose in view, making it the sole business of his life, following it up with the patient, unswerving tenacity of the sleuth hound, he should succeed at last! One thing he at once determined upon,—to *avoid me*. He dreaded that my counsels, and the competency to which he would be at once restored, might cause him to swerve in his resolution; and that his ruined hopes, his father's death, his sister's shame, would remain unavenged. So well did he manage this very minor part of his plan, that, though I caused him to be sought for in all directions, no tidings of him could I obtain. I concluded he had left the country, and, after a few weeks, gave up the inquiry.

Paul's restoration to perfect health was slow, and it was some five or six months before he reappeared in London. His first aim was to make friends with Stephen Cullen, and, if possible, to enter his service as clerk. He managed to meet him as if by accident. Greatly surprised as well as pleased was Cullen by the amenity and frankness of the young man's tone and manner towards him. Paul did not shun speaking of his father's bankruptcy and the subsequent sad events, but fairly admitted that Cullen, who had only enforced his legal rights, was in no manner to blame for

what had occurred. Cullen, whose conscience, as I know from experience, could not have been very tranquil anent the painful subject, was much gratified; and though he had no present vacancy in his office, he said he might soon have one, and meanwhile he would keep a good look-out for any eligible situation that might suit Paul. When asked if he had applied to Lovegold and Co., Paul Arnold replied that he had not, and did not intend to do so: he had cogent private reasons for not returning to their office, and should be mortified if the firm knew he was out of employment. He would be obliged if Mr. Cullen would avoid so much as mentioning his name to any member of the establishment—an injunction which the bill-broker promised to strictly comply with.

Paul Arnold had now an excuse for frequently calling at Cullen's office, and taking casual notes of the business transacted there, who were the chief customers, and so on. Nothing in his way might come of this; still, there could be no harm in dropping pebbles along the road. One or more of these might one day suggest a valuable hint. He moreover quickly acquired a friendly acquaintance with the principal clerk.

One day that he was in the office a fashionably attired young gentleman drove up in a dashing phaeton, sprang out, walked brusquely in, and impatiently demanded if Mr. Cullen was to be seen.

"He is not yet returned from Russell Square," replied the clerk; "nor do I expect him in less than an hour."

"In an hour! Deuced provoking! I want to be off by the twelve o'clock train. Well, I suppose there is no help for it. I will be back in an hour;" and off he went.

"Who may that exquisite swell be?" asked Paul Arnold.

"Adolphus Willoughby, Esquire, one of the most reckless fellows I have ever met with. Had he the chance, he would empty the pockets of a millionaire in a twelvemonth. We do a bill occasionally for him; but never unless guaranteed by his uncle Willoughby, a wealthy gentleman, who resides in Russell Square. Mr. Cullen is gone there now to ask for his signature to a note for £300. I doubt that he will obtain it. The nephew has milked that cow nearly dry. He thought once that he should be his uncle's heir (Mr. Willoughby is a bachelor), but I hope my head will never ache till then."

The conversation changed to other topics, till Mr. Cullen returned. He had succeeded in obtaining Mr. Willoughby's guarantee, for positively "the last time," and Mr. Cullen was quite sure he meant it too. "I am glad you are here, Mr. Arnold," continued the bill-broker. "Mr. Willoughby is in want of a secretary; an intelligent young man, of gentlemanly address, who writes a good hand, and is skilled in accounts. He asked me if I knew of such a person, and I at once named you. What do you say?"

"I could almost hear my heart beat," remarks Arnold, in his manuscript confession, "when I heard that proposition. My imagination is

quick, vivid, seizes upon possibilities in a moment; and the dim, and as yet shapeless forecast shadow, as it were, of the scheme I have since carried through, rose up before my mind's eye."

Paul Arnold warmly thanked Mr. Cullen, and said such a situation would fulfil his most sanguine expectations. Furnished by the bill-broker with a strongly expressed note of introduction, Arnold at once set off for Russell Square, saw Mr. Willoughby, was engaged there and then, and the next morning took up his quarters in the house.

Arnold soon obtained the entire confidence of Mr. Willoughby, an aged gentleman, whose health was fast breaking; had access to all his papers; drew his leases; wrote his letters; in short, before six months were passed, had relieved him of the necessity of penning a line.

Mr. Willoughby's property consisted of a delightful freehold estate in Hertfordshire, the estimated value of which was about one hundred thousand pounds; fourteen or fifteen thousand pounds in the funds; the house in Russell Square, and of course the equipment thereof. This property Paul found out to be disposed of by a will made about five years previously; according to the provisions of which the money in the funds went to the testator's nephew, Adolphus Willoughby; the real estate, the house in Russell Square, the plate, furniture, &c., to his nephew, Reginald Beauchamp, a sister's son.

The resolution fixed itself in Paul Arnold's mind to forge a will, which should reverse these bequests; that is to say, which should bequeath the landed estate, the house, &c., in Russell Square, to Adolphus Willoughby; the money in the funds to Reginald Beauchamp. To forge such a will would to Paul Arnold be an easy task. I have already mentioned his skilled penmanship, and his surprising imitative faculty in caligraphy; and it is a remarkable proof that the "dim, shapeless forecast shadow," as he phrased it, did, in Mr. Cullen's office, rise up before his mind's eye, that he carefully, from the first moment he entered Mr. Willoughby's house, abstained not only from displaying, but from mentioning that he possessed such an imitative faculty. His eager researches also made him acquainted with the important fact, that about two years before, Reginald Beauchamp had seriously offended Mr. Willoughby, who had been heard by several persons to threaten to alter his will. Also that the gentlemen whose names were attached to the existing will were at that time alive, and in the habit of visiting Mr. Willoughby, and had since died. The then secretary, who had engrossed the will upon parchment, was also dead. Mr. Willoughby never, if he could help it, employed lawyers to draw up or engross his deeds, he having entire confidence in his own knowledge of the law. He had, indeed, been an articled clerk to an attorney, before unexpectedly succeeding to a large property. The will was sealed, and the same seal, though that was not of consequence, was come-at-able by Arnold at any moment.

So far there would be no difficulty to prevent the successful commission

of so enormous a crime. But it was no part of Arnold's scheme to permanently enrich Adolphus Willoughby at Reginald Beauchamp's expense. Very far indeed from that, for he had a strong liking for Beauchamp; whilst Willoughby, one of the "most unprincipled, self-indulgent, epicurean, cowardly scamps" he had ever known, Arnold both disliked and despised. Either he must discover or invent means, when the time came to do so—of proving beyond question that the will was a forgery, or the forgery would not be committed. It would not serve his purpose. He thought of the incident in one of Miss Edgeworth's novels, establishing that the will in dispute could not have been executed at the time it was sworn to have been, by the discovery under the seal of a sixpence of a later date than that of the will. That was not, he thought, a sure anchor to ride by. An enemy—Reginald Beauchamp himself—might have had recourse to such a trick for the purpose of invalidating the will. Whilst anxiously meditating the subject—for the sands in Mr. Willoughby's hour-glass were fast running out,—light, light from the bottomless pit, flashed upon him as before, whilst he was gossiping in Mr. Cullen's office. Some one, a stranger, mentioned a new preparation of parchment, which would greatly increase the chances of detecting forged deeds. Arnold was all ear in a moment. It seemed that there was no difference in the appearance of the skin from ordinary parchment, but the patentees had succeeded in fixing an indelible mark, invisible to the naked eye, by which the date of its manufacture could always be ascertained beyond doubt. Mr. Cullen was not there, the clerks paid little heed to the conversation,—they did not use parchment,—and Arnold adroitly changed the subject.

The next day he procured two or three skins, ascertained for himself the truth of what he had heard, and concocted the forged will without delay. The imitation of the signatures was perfect. The genuine will, he knew, had been made in duplicate: the counterpart was in possession of Reginald Beauchamp. The forged will he also executed in duplicate, and, with "mind at ease, at peace, at last, with himself"—his brain must have been permanently diseased by the effects of the fever,—Paul Arnold awaited the course of events.

He had not to wait long. Mr. Willoughby died—was buried. The first genuine will was produced; and then, to every one's astonishment, the second, forged will, by Adolphus Willoughby. It had been placed in his hands, he said, by the deceased himself, with an injunction not to speak of it. The counterpart was of course found amongst the uncle's papers. There was a critical examination of the writing, the signatures, and it was seen to be impossible to distinguish, in those respects, one will from the other. The cogent fact was also recalled to mind, that at about the time of the date of the last will the testator had been grievously offended by Reginald Beauchamp, and been heard to say he would alter the disposition of his property. He had done so with a vengeance, and there was no help for it. The will was proved in due form by

Adolphus Willoughby, the sole executor, and he at once entered into possession.

If Adolphus Willoughby had been wasteful before, he was vastly more so now. The first step was to borrow five thousand pounds, for present use, of Cullen, upon his bill, guaranteed by a mortgage upon the Hertfordshire estate. I should here state that Cullen had made a number of successful hits in the funds since Arnold's bankruptcy; had been very fortunate in his ordinary business; and could not be worth much less than fifty thousand pounds—possibly ten more than that; and had still heavy sums belonging to others at call.

Adolphus Willoughby's career of wasteful dissipation went on *crescendo*; his almost constant companion in his orgies—never a participating associate—being his secretary, Paul Arnold. Paul also never failed to accompany him to Cullen's. The bill-broker, who saw that Arnold possessed immense influence over Willoughby, made the secretary a present of a splendid watch and appendages, as a trifling acknowledgment for securing him so valuable a client. Paul accepted it. He should have payment in full, in time.

Two years passed, at the end of which the tenants of the Hertfordshire estate received notice to pay their rents to Stephen Cullen, of Lothbury, sole mortgagee. The mansion, with the park, was let to a gentleman of fortune, who received the same notice. Mr. Cullen was his own collector, and always upon such occasions his daughter accompanied him. They were charmed with their estate—it was really theirs—and panted for the time when City business might be dispensed with, and they, retiring to Hertfordshire, soar into the class of county landed gentry.

Another year was gone. Cullen, in order to furnish means to Willoughby, had gradually circumscribed his ordinary bill-discounting business, and contemplated throwing it up altogether. By so doing he had been enabled to advance, including interest, commission, &c., eighty thousand pounds, more than all he possessed in the world. The Hertfordshire estate had been regularly conveyed to him, so had the house in Russell Square. Willoughby's career was drawing swiftly towards a close, yet did he not seem greatly cast down; and, what to an experienced hand like Cullen must have been very surprising, did not appear to owe him the least grudge—did not fly now and then into a rage at seeing the bill-broker in possession of a magnificent estate that once was his. Quite the contrary. He often congratulated Cullen on its possession, in quite a jocund tone and manner, and hoped he and Miss Cullen would enjoy themselves many happy years there. Drink must have drowned his wits.

The end was at hand. Willoughby and his shadow, Arnold, waited upon Mr. Cullen by appointment. Willoughby, spite of the enormous sums he had received from the bill-broker, was woefully in debt, and must leave the country. He had nothing left of his inheritance but the rich furniture, massive plate, choice pictures, and numerous rare articles of

virtu at the house in Russell Square. These the appraiser, appointed by Mr. Cullen himself, had estimated would realize by auction at least five thousand pounds. Adolphus Willoughby was prepared to execute a bill of sale upon receiving that sum of money. Cullen, who was anxious to get Willoughby out of the country, had agreed to the arrangement, though obliged to borrow a part of the money. Mr. Cullen's solicitor soon arrived, and the transaction was concluded. "Good-bye, old fellow," said Willoughby, shaking Cullen heartily by the hand. "You have been a generous friend to me, and I sincerely wish you joy of your property. Good day, gentlemen." And he passed out, humming an opera air. Arnold, looking from him towards Cullen and the lawyer with a sardonic smile and a shrug of the shoulders, followed. The next day Willoughby left the country. Paul Arnold remained in England, and took lodgings in the Albany. I now frequently saw him, questioned him of his means and prospects, and found him almost repulsively reserved. The subject was distasteful to him; but what surprised me more was the strange, morbid pleasure he evidently took in recalling the bankruptcy, the overthrow of his own prospects, the suicide of his father, his sister's fall and miserable end. Positively he had the tone, the look, of a man reckoning up treasure of incalculable value. I understand now that he was striving to deaden the stings of an accusing conscience, by counting up and dwelling upon the wrongs that had goaded him into crime. I was strongly impressed at the time that his intellect was shaken to its base; and I now believe he had never been in his right mind since he was struck down by cerebral fever.

I had dined early in the City—an unusual thing for me to do,—and on my return to the office found Paul Arnold there. His manner was strange, and there was a fitful glare in his eyes, which confirmed my doubts of his sanity.

"I have a favour, a great favour to ask of you, sir; to accompany me to Mr. Cullen, Stephen Cullen's office. I wish you to be a witness of what passes there. Miss Cullen is, you have I dare say heard, about to be married to the eldest son of Thomas Majoribanks, Esquire, whose estate—that of Marlands, in Hertfordshire—so conveniently adjoins that of Mr. Cullen. The lawyers meet at Mr. Cullen's this afternoon to arrange about the settlements. I have sent a note to say I have something of importance to communicate, and shall, if they have no objection, attend accompanied by a friend. I have also written to Mr. Reginald Beauchamp to be present."

This was said almost in a breath; and feeling some curiosity to know what was pending, I consented, and we set forth together. For some few minutes we walked on in silence; then he burst into a strange laugh followed by, "Poetical justice! Ha! People say *that* is confined to novels and plays. Not always. What do you say?"

"I have nothing to say. Here we are at Mr. Cullen's office door.' We were invited into a private room, where sat Mr. Cullen, two solicitors

and Mr. Reginald Beauchamp, whom I knew by sight. All four gentlemen wore a strange aspect, as if something were wrong, though they could not imagine what.

As soon as we were seated, Mr. Cullen said, "Mr. Arnold, you have written to say that you have something important to communicate relative to the business these gentlemen and myself are met to transact. You have also given notice to Mr. Reginald Beauchamp to attend. Will you have the kindness to explain?"

"With more pleasure than I can express, Stephen Cullen," replied Arnold, who had regained in a few moments his usual stern self-possession—"with more pleasure than I can express, Stephen Cullen. Neither the estate in Hertfordshire, nor the house in Russell Square, conveyed to you by Adolphus Willoughby; nor the furniture, plate, pictures, upon which you hold a bill of sale, executed by the said Adolphus Willoughby, really belong to you; forasmuch that they never belonged to Adolphus Willoughby. All—estate, house, furniture—are the property of this gentleman, Mr. Reginald Beauchamp."

There was a silence, a pause of blank astonishment, broken by one of the lawyers, who, looking at his *confrère*, exclaimed, "The man must be mad!" I noticed, however, that Cullen was frightfully excited. His face was the colour of a corpse, and he trembled so violently as to be scarcely able to keep himself in his chair. Mr. Beauchamp also manifested great emotion. He had a wife and large family, and had always felt that they had been cruelly wronged by his uncle's second will.

"I am as sane as you are," replied Arnold. "The will dated about two years before the late Mr. Willoughby's death is the instrument under which Adolphus Willoughby claimed and obtained possession of the various properties I have mentioned. Well, that will is a forgery! I forged it!"

"He is mad! he is insane!" screamed Cullen, getting up and sitting down again, in pitiable terror. "He is mad—insane. Turn him out of the place."

"I will go for my solicitor," said Mr. Beauchamp, who was now almost as much excited as Cullen, though in an opposite way: "he lives close by."

"I am not mad, I repeat; and if I were, it would not avail the villain who ruined me, murdered my father, brought my sister to shame. I have taken care that proof of the second will being a forgery shall be complete, unquestionable. The kind of parchment upon which it is written was not manufactured till two years after the supposed date of the will,—an indelible date in the skin itself will prove that,—not manufactured till the secretary who was supposed to have written it, and the gentlemen supposed to have witnessed it, were long since dead. There was no need for it, but remembering the Edgeworth incident, I placed a half-sovereign under the seal, also of a date two years later than that of the forged will."

No one spoke—no one stirred. We were literally stricken dumb. I for one felt as if I were standing on my head. Mr. Beauchamp returned with his solicitor, and at that gentleman's request, Arnold repeated his statement.

"If this person speak the truth, and I have no doubt he does, there can be no question—though I am sorry for Mr. Cullen, exceedingly sorry—that the property is yours, Mr. Beauchamp; and that there is no possibility of for one moment disputing your claim."

The other gentlemen agreed, if the parchment contained an intrinsic proof that it was manufactured two years after the date of the will, and long after the death of the witnesses; if a half-sovereign of a later date were found under the seal. But all that remained to be proved.

Poor Cullen could hold out no longer. He slipped from his chair with a groan, and fell in a fit on the floor. A more distressing, more terrible scene, I may say, I have never witnessed. Paul Arnold was the only unmoved person present. I and he were going away, when Mr. Majoribanks' solicitor asked Mr. Cullen's if he intended to give Arnold into custody. "I think not," he replied; "I believe him to be insane."

We then left, and the lawyers decided to investigate the matter without delay.

"Mr. Lovegold," said Arnold, "you are indignant with me; but had I not a cause? In this paper," he went on, putting several rolled-up, closely-written sheets into my hand, "you will find every particular faithfully recorded. One thing," he added, sharply—"one thing I have forgotten to mention; I have never touched one penny of Cullen's money. Good-bye, sir; we shall never see each other again. I am weary of the world, and am glad to know I shall not be long in it."

Those last words had an awful significance, which I had not attached to them. In less than two hours after Arnold and I parted, Mr. Hardwicke, the magistrate, was standing by his bedside, in the Albany, taking his deposition *in articulo mortis*, relative to the forgery of the second will. Every particular was clearly related. "You say this, knowing that you cannot live, knowing that you are now dying?"

"I do. It is the exact truth, as I hope for mercy from Him before whom I shall shortly stand."

After the magistrate's departure, Paul Arnold gradually sunk. Partial delirium supervened, and he died with the words, "Father, sister," on his lips. He had committed suicide with a subtle poison, which, he says in his manuscript, he had long before provided himself with.

There was no difficulty in proving the second will to be a forgery, and Mr. Beauchamp was placed in almost immediate possession of the various properties. Cullen was of course utterly ruined—beggared. He passed through the Bankruptcy Court, but never looked up again. I do not think he survived many years. Miss Cullen, who was so greatly to be pitied, went on the stage. There are many persons who will recognize the actors in this sad story, through the veil of changed names and localities.

A MELODY.

How many passionate eyes
 Look up to the stars to-night !
 How many a spirit,
 Where angels can hear it,
 Talks to its fellow in sighs !
 To-night, to-night,
 The moon, where she wanders above her
 Star-sisters, dewy and bright,
 Is full of the pain or delight
 Of the loved and the lover.

The night shuts down on my heart
 Like an icy hand of lead ;
 I wander
 Near thee, and squander
 My love and my strength where thou art
 Sleeping alone and apart
 With the churchyard dead.
 I ponder ! I ponder !
 While lovers look up in their pride
 To the white-handed moon and her maidens,
 And the hearts of the loved by their side
 Throb to passionate cadence.

I think, if my sleeper could rise
 Out of her beautiful sleep,—
 Could walk the air,
 With her yellow hair,
 And that last sweet light in her eyes,
 Mingling the blue of the skies
 With shadows of death, dark and deep,
 So fair ! so fair !
 Teaching, with passionate sighs,
 The lovers around me her story,—
 Into a cloud the moon would creep
 With her stars, and the loved and the loving weep
 Till their bright hair grew hoary !

NEWTON NEVILLE.

NEW YORK AS IT IS

BY MAJOR H. BYNG HALL.

I AM located at the Clarendon Hotel. So, for the benefit of those who may chance to follow in my footsteps and visit the States, whether on duty or pleasure, let us mildly discuss the question of hotels; it is a very serious question, believe me, to all travellers, both mentally and physically, externally and internally. I know people differ greatly as regards their appreciation of these necessary locations to the wanderer's comfort: some prefer the lively, bustling, and cheap; others affect the quiet, gastronomic, and moderate; a third looks to fashion, the most incomprehensible word—to me, at least—which I know to exist. Were I asked before the Civil Service examiners—and I wonder they do not ask the question, for their own benefit, as well as that of the untravelled world at large—where I have found the best hotels—which superlative “best” I understand to embrace cleanliness, comfort, quiet, and, above all, first-rate gastronomy, combined with moderate charges—I should say in Switzerland and in New York. The latter without the moderate charges, inasmuch as in desiring to drink anything but iced water—and man cannot live on iced water—that which otherwise would be moderate becomes unpleasantly extravagant. And ere I go further on this subject, permit me to explain by the word gastronomy I infer the possession of a cook—I care not of what nation—who can prepare a simple repast for the lover of simplicity, or a rich repast for a lover of grease; in fact, an artist who performs his art in accordance with public tastes,—as a cook should perform it.

Well, the hotels at New York are numerous, far too numerous to mention here. I shall therefore only select a few. We have the enormous and bustling. These are named, if I am not incorrect, the Fifth Avenue and St. Nicholas. Enormous indeed are they: to speak positively as to the number of beds they make up would be in vain. I fancy five hundred, at least, would be within the mark. On occasions, sofas, tables, &c., coming into aid add a hundred more. The first is the fashion; its location is fashionable. The second, midway in the Broadway, I fancy is commercial;—in fact, its visitors are, or would be in any other country, *mixed*, but in America all are gentlemen. Doubtless it would also be considered fashionable: I only write as I feel individually.

Then we have the Clarendon and the Prevorst; these are smaller, and unquestionably may be considered aristocratic—a better word, as I read it, than fashionable—and the Everet House, a shade, only a shade, lower; and the New York, said to be a Southern house; and a host of others.

At the Fifth Avenue the traveller is allowed to spit and smoke as he walks up and down the vast corridor or entrance hall; at the St. Nicholas I fancy the same process is permitted, if not in the corridor leading

into the Broadway. At each house you may dine with three or four hundred companions daily, or in your private room. You may breakfast and sup and lunch for an average charge of three dollars a day ;—previous to the war, less. This, however, be it observed, by no means includes extras, such as cocktail and sling, cigars, iced champagne, soda water, and brandy,—all mere necessities to a respectable New Yorker, to which may not seldom be added a bottle of Croton water matutinally—a combination of Rochelle salts and magnesia, with the same effect on the inward man.

On my first arrival at New York, I confess to having had a strong belief in the necessity, if I required nourishment, of attending the public meals to the moment ; and that if I failed to do so, little chance would remain as to my hunger being satisfied : in fact, I truthfully confess I believed that breakfast and dinner were mere scrambling affairs,—the first come, the first served ;—take what you can, or get what you can. But at the Clarendon Hotel, in which I have resided six months, and the Prevorst, where I frequently dined, and where, as there is no public table, the traveller is not compelled to pay for what he does not eat, I own to having been most agreeably surprised.

The meals were not only regular and abundant—in fact, unnecessarily abundant,—but the gastronomical art displayed by Monsieur Baptist, the French cook, was equal, if not superior to any hotel cooking I ever met with in any part of Europe. The table was most comfortable—I might almost say elegant ; and as for the necessity of sitting down to the moment, or anything approaching to vulgarity or ill-breeding, or want of due attention to the courtesies of life, I confess I never discovered it ; the attendance, moreover, was good, and I may name, for the curious in such matters, that breakfast was served from eight till eleven ; luncheon from one to two ; dinners, half-past five ; tea, eight ; supper from nine till twelve. And here let me add the bill of fare for a dinner ; it will serve in a great measure to explain what was the nature of the other meals which preceded or followed it.

SOUP.

Okra, aux Tomates.

FISH.

Baked Blackfish, à l'Italienne.

BOILED.

Corned Beef and cabbage ; Leg of Mutton, caper sauce ; Chicken, parsley sauce.

ROAST.

Beef ; Pork, apple sauce ; Chickens.

Boned Capon, aux truffes ; Cold Ham ; Cold Tongue ; Mayonnaise de Volaille ; Lobsters, plain.

ENTREES.

Perdreaux, bardés, braisés, au celeri, au jus ; Jeune Poulet, sauté, à la Marseilloise ; Crabs, farcies, à la provençale ; Hachis de blanc de Dinde, à la

crème ; Tête de Veau, en tortue, aux quenelles ; Kari de Tendrons d'Agne l'Indienne ; Croquettes de Ris de Veau, aux fines herbes ; Macaroni, au from aux tomates ; Beignets de Pommes, glacés, à la cannelle.

RELISHES.

Cucumbers ; Pickles ; Horseradish ; Beets ; Worcestershire Sauce ; Lettuc

VEGETABLES.

Baked Mashed Potatoes ; Mashed Potatoes ; Boiled Potatoes ; Baked & Potatoes ; Boiled Rice ; Squash ; Onions ; Turnips ; Beets ; Fried Egg Pl Cauliflower ; Stewed Tomatoes.

PASTRY.

Biscuit Pudding ; Quince Pie ; Prussian Cake ; Meringues, à la rose ; V Ice Cream.

DESSERT.

Almonds ; Raisins ; Prunes ; Apples ; Oranges ; Pecan Nuts ; Coffee.

I own that the precocity of the children admitted to these mea varying from six to fourteen years of age, an age in old England that w have-found them in the nursery—as well as their appetites, did at t surprise and alarm me, as regards their juvenile digestion and fi career in life ; particularly at breakfast, when in the coolest possible r ner they would possess themselves of the bill of fare, and select h dozen dishes, commencing with stewed oysters, and ending with l steak. Their parents permitted it, however, who had the right to inter certainly not I. I write only in simple truth of the modes and man of Yankee youth.

In fact, as far as the Clarendon Hotel, New York, is concerned—the exception of various youths called chamber boys, who generally as a form in the vestibule when they were wanted, and rushed about house when they were not wanted,—an unexplainable species of German-Irish class, whom no words of kindness could attract ;—in whose thoughts dwelt wholly and solely on green-backs, and a night to spend them ; and who, with a laudible desire to better themselves, for ever changing ; the consequence being that you have to encoun strange face with your shaving water three times a week, and a determ tion in every new attendant never to clean your boots properly, or l them beyond the threshold of your apartment—I hold that, with one exception, he who finds himself located at the Clarendon, if he reasonable man, will pronounce himself well satisfied. The other prin hotels of New York are on a similar scale and plan, though possibly so quiet,—unless it be the Provost House.

The theatres at New York, as elsewhere, appear to me absolutely n sary appendages to the hotels. Moreover, what would young Ameri do during the long winter evenings without some excitement or sensat They cannot always smoke, they cannot for ever drink cocktails. they read much ? I fancy not. Do they love the peace and quietne home—our blessed English homes ? I fancy not. I speak of the y

and bachelor class. Well, they must do something to pass time. Sensation or excitement is as necessary to them as their daily bread. Perhaps it is the nature of their education, or their tastes, or the climate; but thus it is. So, dinner being over, and the absolutely necessary cigar smoked, they rush to the theatres or operas, or the clubs, or who knows where, till the midnight hour approaches, and another cigar is necessary—positively required—ere they lay down to await the coming of another day. And what is more—as far as I could judge—they never seemed to be in want of the means to gratify all these little recreations.

I am speaking more particularly of the dwellers in hotels: in private houses, in many of which I was received with untold kindness, there appeared to me much of the happy associations of the home circle; but as regards the married men who live in hotels—and hotels in New York are used as winter residences during the season by a large class of the community—why, they do, as it appeared to me—with rare exceptions,—pretty much the same as the bachelors. They go, with or without their *cars sposas*, to the theatres and operas, often finishing up the night with a nice little champagne supper at Delmonico's or the Maison Dorée—of which fashionable restaurants I shall hereafter speak,—and then to bed.

There are many theatres at New York, and various other places—so called—of amusements, commencing with the opera, terminating with Wood's and Christy's Minstrels—gentlemen artists, with their faces painted black, and possessing considerable theatrical talent. Whether the original so-called Christy's Minstrels are, for the moment I write, in London, New York, Boston, or Baltimore, who dare say? They appear to me to turn up in every capital in Europe.

The Opera—at least, in my opinion—is a remarkably fine and cheerful house,—well built, tastefully decorated, well lighted, roomy and airy, elegant and effective,—possibly not quite so large or so attractive as Covent Garden, but in all respects suitable to New York. A few of the largest and handsomest boxes are enclosed, like ours. These, for the most part, are the property, and are occupied—I say it, spite of republicanism—by the aristocratic or highest (if you like it better, say the richest), but certainly the best bred and best educated class. All the other boxes are also private,—that is to say, although the body of the house is open to the view of all, each box is divided from the other, containing four or five persons, as may be. There are also reserved stalls, and the pit. But all who attend have, as the Scotch would say, a self-contained arm-chair. The price of entry is not dear,—one dollar for the pit, a dollar and a half for the reserved stalls: the boxes vary in price, according to size and position, whether taken for the season or the night. All is quiet and orderly, and well regulated; and when one looks on the elegant—nay, at times splendid dresses of the fairer class—and fair, indeed, if not lasting, is American beauty—and the white neckcloths and

Jouvin gloves of the republican manhood, it is very difficult to believe that universal suffrage exists and rules the land.

Having touched on vocal amusement or sensations, let us speak of comedy, farce, and tragedy. I select the pleasant theatre called Wallack's—*par excellence*, as a model theatre. In no capital have I seen a theatre where there is such uniform good acting, such comfort, or such thorough order for the spectator, as at Wallack's. In fact, it may be called a sort of aristocratic after-dinner lounge, where the digestive powers of man gain health and strength in calm repose, under the pleasant excitement of inward laughter, and a repletion of undisturbed amusement. This house is not large, but airy and elegant; filled each night by an audience that possibly no other country in the world could produce;—understand me, I mean for decorum and thorough enjoyment of the abundant amusement and admirable acting which the outlay of a dollar has afforded them. This house, if I am not in error, is the private property of Mr. Wallack, sen.; built by him and owned by him—Mr. Wallack, so well known and appreciated years since in England.

Then we have the Winter Garden, Niblo's, and others,—even to the theatres of Bowery, which I confess to never having entered; nevertheless, all more or less good in their way, and suited to the general tenor of their audiences.

I will end this brief theatrical notice with the black-skinned, black-faced minstrels' most talented and amusing additions to the craving for excitement which exists under the mid-day sun as the midnight moon in the bustling city of New York. I have dwelt on the pleasant side of the picture, while others have written of prisons, and penitentiaries, and poor-houses, because the readers of periodicals may sometimes prefer the practical and pleasant to the practical and sad: nevertheless, there is much of sadness, much of sin, much of sorrow, in this ever-changing city. Yet even with the bitter consequences of a terrible civil war knocking hourly, as it were, at their doors, making desolate the hearths and hearts of thousands, pleasure and excitement go hand and hand on their onward course, regardless of all else. The theatres are nightly filled, and the waiters of Delmonico's and the Maison Dorée sleep with their eyes open, if they ever sleep at all, during the long hours of the winter nights.

To speak of the society of a city in which for months I have mixed, is a difficult task. The earnest desire not to offend by a truthful yet oftentimes unpleasant remark, and the thousand thoughts which crowd on the mind when looking into homes where you may have been kindly and warmly welcomed, and hospitably entertained, is a delicate and apparently ungracious task; yet while no names are mentioned, no confidence broken, a reference to the general tone of society, in any nation or city, is the province of all to write and all to read, who desire to live and learn.

Well, to return to the society of New York:—I unaffectedly and truthfully own that I never thought that any place so new to me, so far away

from home feelings and home associations, could ever dwell on my mind with the crowd of affectionate sentiments that cluster round my heart as I write these lines, engendered solely from the unexampled kindness and constant hospitality I have received. I honestly confess there are those in this city whose society and friendship would brighten to me the darkest winter's day. Stranger as I came among them, in sickness as in health, I have met with nothing but unselfish courtesy and unremitting kindness; and as far as I am individually concerned, among those with whom I associated, though many a pleasant argument has occurred in conversation, I never recollect hearing a bitter, or ill-bred, or unfeeling word having reference to England uttered by an American. That such feelings may possibly—nay, do exist, I doubt not. Such sentiments are, however, to be found only in the minority, and that minority is not among the higher and educated class. I have made use of this term higher class, and that when speaking of a country where we are led to believe there exists no such division in society, inasmuch as it not only does exist, but is as apparent as the line drawn between the dwellers in Belgravia and White-chapel; and such must and will ever be the case in all communities and all countries, let their government be republican, or despotic, or constitutional. Place twenty men on a barren island, and see if a month elapses ere some one among the score does not assert himself as the superior of the remaining nineteen. And I for one venture boldly to assert, that there are few societies in any European country where more simple and generous hospitality abounds, where it is offered more cordially to a stranger, if he deserve it, and where less is expected in return.

A stranger on visiting England, that is to say, London, would possibly be told, and not incorrectly told, that the dwellings of the aristocracy were for the most part clustered in the neighbourhood of Belgravia; though of course there are equally aristocratic resting-places in the Great Babylon. And at New York, on somewhat similar grounds, though not with equal justice, the Fifth Avenue, or Maddison Square, would be pointed out. Now it is perfectly true that the homes of the richest are to be found in these localities, and it is equally true that few handsomer houses exist in New York. Yet I fancy the majority of the dwellers therein claim their position somewhat more on the account of wealth, at times only temporarily possessed, than from any sounder position, though, of course, there are bright exceptions. And I own to having discovered, during a residence of six months in the modern city, many families who lived far from these fashionable purlieus, whose unaffected hospitality, high mental cultivation, and knowledge of foreign lands, would have given them precedence in any capital in Europe. It is, however, scarcely necessary that I should remark that the society of New York is purely commercial. No man appears to be without occupation; consequently the fathers of families, who receive you so kindly, courteously, and hospitably at their tables at six or seven in the evening, are invisible save in their offices during the

day. The ladies also, unless you are intimate with the family, being in the habit of setting apart a day for the reception of their friends, are almost equally unapproachable in the daytime. But you may call on the chance of finding them at home in the evening, and then you are ever welcome.

I own that when I first arrived in New York, I felt somewhat sensitive as regards the continual kind expressions that Mr. So-and-So would be most happy to see me at his house, or in his opera-box, or at his office. But Mr. So-and-So never called on me, never left his card, as is the custom of our native land among those who desire to become acquainted. I soon, however, discovered that the gentleman's time was far too valuable to lose a whole morning in gadding after me, and that it was the same with all my acquaintance, but that what they said they meant.

The women of New York are, with rare exceptions, fair and well dressed; the younger ones are possibly more forward in manner and appearance than their years would guarantee; nevertheless wanting neither in charm of manner nor of person. The climate must answer for the rest. The men I found to be well informed, generous, and kind.

Baltimore is, *par excellence*, a city for gastronomical indulgence, which doubtless causes human nature to be thirsty. Thus the idea that even one else, come from whence he may, should be thirsty also, creates never-ending taste for champagne and claret with these gastronomic pastimes, and a national habit, or rather, say, exciting desire for cocktails, all times. These little internal recreations by no means necessarily lead to inebriation or excess. Moreover, they are offered, as are all the courtesies of life, with such hearty good will, that it is necessary for the stranger to be careful. The general tone of Baltimore society is, notwithstanding these,—say, if you will,—hospitalities, more exciting, but not so jealous as that of New York; but it is not less agreeable or open-handed.

While the good people of Boston, older, possibly, in the courteous habits of life than either of the former cities, blend all their virtues and their faults into a subdued form of hearty good fellowship and hospitality

THE POET BORN, NOT MADE

A QUIET thinker of sweet thoughts, I waver
 Among my dreams, clothing them evermore
 With form and favour.

But Hope, who culls delight for me,
 Tuned oftentimes into poesy,
 Imbues with her soft light the loving lore
 Contented men adore.

And though a mean-clad Fortune oft doth set her
 Hard hand upon the singing robe I wear,
 I deem it better ;

Content am I that she shall fling
 Her shadows o'er the songs I sing ;
 For she and her twin children, Joy and Care,
 Have lent the lute I bear.

Past hours, with all the holier thought I treasure,
 Move sunward to the melody they make,
 Flowering to pleasure.

And I have link'd myself and these
 To love in many melodies ;
 And I have sworn to sing for singing's sake,
 Until my heart should break !

Thoughts that reseek the bosom whence they flutter,
 Laughter and tears that mingle as they flow,
 Feelings that utter

Music my heart and soul contain,
 Take form and substance in my brain,
 Uttering, in sounds of sweetness evermoe,
 All I have known and know.

When the heart listens and the blood rejoices,
 Where Beauty broodeth by herself, and sings,—

When unknown voices
 Sow o'er the melancholy hours
 Music that springs like grass and flowers,—
 When Fancy feels the sunlight on her wings,—
 I am the guest of kings !

Without the Titan-world, its truth or error,
 Like a lost brooklet, busily I steal ;

Living to mirror
 My quiet nights and home-bred days
 In simple rhymes and roundelays,
 Which harbour sweetest sounds if they reveal
 Half I have felt and feel !

A PIECE OF PLATE

BY SIR C. F. LASCELLES WRAXALL, BART.

A MEDICAL commission had sat upon me, and unanimously decided that Her Majesty's Indian forces would henceforth count one captain the less. They all said that it was the piece of slug which had lodged in my shoulder-bone, at the first relief of Lucknow, which did the business; but I had my private opinion. When a man does not know exactly how long he has to live, he may prove reckless, and drink more brandy pawnee than is good for him; nor are long marches in a torrid sun, and camping out in the jungle dew, exactly conducive to health. After all, I was not particularly sorry about being shelved. The fighting was over for a while. I was tolerably well before the world, as I had held the command of a regiment of irregulars, and had no opportunity for spending my money. There was a trifle of loot to the good, my pension and allowance amounted to a very decent sum, and I had the Lucknow prize money looming in the future. Luckily, I was not dependent on the latter.

When I returned to England, the medical man whom I consulted about my shoulder, which seemed to have reached a stage of chronic rheumatism, told me mysteriously that I wanted "setting up." The best way of doing so would be by retiring to some quiet sea-side place, taking regular exercise, bathing every day (it was the coldest weather which had been known for years), and generally looking after myself. This advice was, perhaps, worth the guinea I paid for it, but the difficulty lay in selecting the quiet sea-side place. I had been absent from England so long that I was quite innocent of such matters, and fancied that Brighton would be about the mark. But my medico shook his head, he told me that Brighton was a suburb of London, and perhaps more conducive to dissipation than the capital itself, and that would not do at all. If he might suggest, Pentgate was the very place for me; it was some miles from any railway-station, and hence was not invaded by excursionists during the summer months; the society was select and quiet (this meant slow, I could see, but his dignity did not permit him to say the term); and, in short, it was just the spot which would suit me. As a curious coincidence, my physician had a son established at Pentgate as a medical man, to whom he would be happy to give me a letter of introduction.

As it was a matter of perfect indifference to me where I pitched my tent, I decided on Pentgate; and there I and my faithful Stubbs, who had been my servant for years, and refused to remain behind when I left India, found ourselves toward the beginning of February. Certainly, this is the best period of the year to judge of the attractions of a watering-place, and dreary enough Pentgate looked, with half its houses shuttered while waiting for the summer swallows. It is a quaint little place

though,—a sort of compromise between a fishing-port and a watering-place, and unable to decide exactly which it is. In support of the latter theory, there is a certain number of squares and crescents, very white-faced and green-shuttered; but, unluckily, most of the houses still remain in the shell, as colonists did not arrive fast enough to satisfy the builder's sanguine expectations. He went through the Court, and retired on a competency; and there the houses stand, until they collapse, through the fishermen and their wives stealing the joists and beams for firewood. Pentgate was a place of broken promises. Once on a time a royal duke had visited it during the summer, and expressed his determination to come again. Of course this would make the fortune of Pentgate, and the wildest spirit of speculation seized on the townspeople; nothing less would satisfy them than "shutting up" Brighton. Unhappily, the royal duke forgot his promise, or died, or something of that sort, and Pentgate was left lamenting that it had put its faith in princes. Foiled in these ambitious views, the townsfolk resolved that Pentgate should become celebrated for its fisheries. A frightfully ugly kyanized jetty was run out, half a dozen fishing-boats were established, and to work they went with an ardour worthy of a better cause than "luring the finny brood with human art and human guile out of the silvery flood," as Mr. Theodore Martin has it after Goethe; but the Pentgatites forgot that fish were distinguished by their absence off these coasts, and a haul of mackerel was not remembered even by that nuisance, the oldest inhabitant. Disappointed again, Pentgate subsided into a place which had seen better days. Clergymen's widows opened lodging-houses of the approved sea-side model; a wicket was put up at the entrance of the jetty, where, by payment of a penny, the visitors could enjoy in the summer the dulcet notes of a starveling brass band; some mighty speculator erected half a dozen bathing machines; and thus prepared, Pentgate sat down to wait for prosperity to visit it.

But there was an element in the town which debarred progress. A colony of half-pay officers, with large small families, gradually retiring before the invasion of civilization and railways, had finally made a stand at Pentgate. The town decidedly had its advantages. In the first place, it was ten miles from any railway, and even the wildest speculator would not dream of making a line to it. Next, living was cheap, and that was a consideration; for the air was very healthy, and induced mighty appetites among the half-payings. These families, then, formed a solemn alliance, and resolved to defend Pentgate, at all hazards, against the invaders. This did not at all suit the Pentgatites, for the half-pays did not spend any vast amount of money in the town, and were in the habit of having down parcels from London—the greatest of all offences in the eyes of a country tradesman. Another element of discord was ere long introduced: several retired county lawyers, doctors, and wealthy tradespeople were allured, by artful advertisements in the local papers, to establish their lares in Pentgate. At first they tried to coalesce with the half-pays, but were greeted with

such *hauteur*, that they declared a war to the knife. In this war the ladies—bless them!—were the aggressors, and the battles used to take place in the church. As the new comers were relatively much wealthier, they were enabled to convert their pews into a very parterre of glistening silks and satins, the sight of which produced a great amount of heart-burning even among young ladies who had been instructed from their youth up, and, *pour cause*, to eschew dress. Imagine the feelings of a bronzed veteran, who had a hard matter to make both ends meet, when his six blooming daughters assailed him with tears, and declared the impossibility of going to church unless they had new bonnets. Of course their mamma backed them up, and the veteran would end by striking off his port wine ration, and solacing his wounded feelings with gin and water.

Of course, the two antagonistic parties met as rarely as possible, but there were occasions when they could not help meeting. In winter, for instance, when it was found absolutely necessary, in order to avoid softening of the brain, to have some social relaxation, weekly dances took place at the assembly-rooms, where the two parties met as on neutral ground. The young people were naturally compelled to dance together or sit mum-chance; but it was tacitly agreed that no claim to intimacy should be raised on this account. Hence, when Miss Flora Mountchesney met her partner of the previous night, Mr. Tapeley, on the jetty, they passed each other as perfect strangers. Such was the agreeable hornets' nest into which I, poor innocent, ventured.

The leader of the aristocrats was Major Mountchesney, masculine parent of the aforesaid Miss Flora, and he claimed the proud distinction through his rank and his wealth. He was really well off, for a wonder, having married the sister of the lord lieutenant, Sir Charles Dashover, who gave herself no slight airs, by the way; but even had he not done so, his martial demeanour would have entitled him to respect. Buttoned up to the chin, and displaying as little white as possible, he paraded the jetty every inch a soldier. His clean shaven skin would have gladdened the heart of Sir George Brown, and his black whiskers were a compromise between the mutton chop and the now fashionable artillery style. Still there was a mystery attaching to the Major: according to his own hints he had seen service in nearly every part of the world, but none ever remembered noticing his name in despatches: but there was no doubt that he was a gallant and distinguished veteran of the old wars, and consequently entitled to look down on the Crimeans; which, to render him justice, he did to a considerable extent.

Although a stranger to every one, I flatter myself that I produced a sensation in Pentgate. My letter of introduction, if not particularly beneficial to my health, was of service in making me known; and as my doctor's position rendered him an enforced neutral, I was soon on friendly terms in both camps. I did not see any reason why I should pronounce for either party. The civilians gave excellent dinner-parties, which were

not matter of frequency among the military ; while the latter, I regret to say, smelt terribly of the shop. This was not surprising : forced on the society of their fellows, they told each other old worn-out tales, which they tacitly agreed to accept as novel and original. Before I had known Paymaster-with-the-honorary-rank-of-Major Wotherspoon more than a week, that distinguished veteran had favoured me thrice with his story about his memorable duel with Ensign Widgeon, of the Clonakilty Fencibles. The first time, I remember, the *teterrima causa* was an impertinent remark made at a ball to a young lady to whom Wotherspoon was paying his addresses ; on the second it was a disputed bet at a billiard-table ; and on the third, a card quarrel after mess. I can only account for the divergent statements on the supposition that the peppery paymaster had been engaged in so many affairs of honour, that he had, in the course of time, confounded them. However, I was on good terms with all except Major Mountchesney, who informed "his young friend," as he was pleased to term me, that this friendship depended on my resigning the fellowship of the civilians. Great as the honour of his amity was, there were certain reasons of a perfectly private nature which rendered it impossible for me to give up visiting at least one house.* Hence I sacrificed the patronage of Major Mountchesney, and I trust that I bore the loss with manly resignation.

Another circumstance materially enhanced my popularity. In Pentgate, as in all seaports, the fishermen were starving in the winter, and considered that they had a vested interest in the charity of the townspeople : they ignored all idea of the workhouse, and sat down patiently while a committee was collecting funds for their support. It had been found by experience that the charitable liked to have something in return for their money, and hence it had become a rule to engage a lecturer, or an orrery, or the musical glasses, as a means of augmenting the funds. Any amusement was such a rarity in Pentgate, that people looked forward to the lecture as a complete mental dissipation. Somewhat to my surprise, our excellent rector waited upon me with a suggestion that I should deliver some lectures on the Indian mutiny,—a subject not so honeycombed then as it is at the present day. Probably the cold bathing had strengthened my nerves, for after a little consideration the idea smiled on me, as the French say, and I assented to make an ass of myself in public. It is true that I had delivered several lectures, while in India, to the troops, but that was a horse of another colour, into whose mouth people did not look. But in the present case my audience would pay, and consequently had a right to be critical. However, I jotted down my recollections, sent them to a literary friend in London to be licked into shape, and awaited the coming trial. Ere long, though, I received another "facer" from fate : the town was placarded with handbills announcing my lecture, with a footline to the effect that "Captain Mauleverer Smith (my name, ladies and gentlemen)

* Here we find written on the margin of the paper, "Oh Eliza !"—P. D.

would, by particular request, appear in the uniform of the Mustee Fustee Irregulars, which regiment he had commanded during the mutiny." Now I had fought the last campaign in a mess jacket, a pair of very ragged overalls, and a straw hat; and these articles, had they been in existence, would not have conveyed a very exalted idea of the fabled East. I thought, therefore, that there would be no harm in stealing a march upon the worthy Pentgatites, and I wrote to my agents, requesting them to procure me the uniform of an ex-captain in the Osmanli horse, with which Holywell Street was glutted. As every officer in the Bashis invented his own costume, my agents suffered from an embarrassment of riches, but they picked me out one which was, perhaps, a trifle gaudy. It consisted of a light blue, very tight-fitting tunic, without buttons or collar, and covered with, at a moderate estimate, two thousand yards of gold lace; over this was a sleeveless tabard, open in front, consisting of a pink ground all worked over with gold; and the rest of the costume was composed of cherry-red trousers, nearly all gold stripe, Napoleon boots, silver-gilt chain gauntlets and gorget, and a very rakish red hussar cap.

In this attire, and with my medals on my chest, I made my appearance on the platform, before a most fashionable audience. I was greeted with loud applause, only slightly marred by Major Mountchesney leaning across three benches, and remarking, in an elephantine whisper, "I say, Wother-spoon, no wonder we lost caste in the Crimea, when fellows are allowed to mountebank in that way. Great Ged! I wonder what the Dook would have said to it." To whom the paymaster,—“Hoot toot, Meejor, the service has been going to the dogs ever sin’ ye left it.” Wotherspoon was an old soldier, and knew that this public compliment would secure him a dinner, which, I am glad to say, it did. After taking the usual sip at the glass of water, which forms a lecturer’s lenten face, and which I may be pardoned for having fortified with a couple of wineglasses of Glen Livat, I plunged boldly into my harangue, and succeeded beyond my expectations. My success was extraordinary, and the lecture brought in a sum of money such as had never been known before, and I became quite a Triton among the Pentgate minnows.

Shortly after these occurrences, England was attacked by the periodical Gallo-phobia, which, on this occasion, came to a head in the volunteer movement. Of course, Pentgate was not behind the rest of the world, for every man felt convinced that the French, if they did come, would inevitably land at their jetty. This excitement was intense, and for a while nothing less would satisfy the population of 1,500, than establishing a *corps d’armée* at the least. The half-pays put themselves at the head of the movement, but soon finding that if they occupied commissions they might be called on to subscribe largely toward the uniforms, they gradually backed out, and formed themselves into a committee of management, which enabled them to offer a maximum of advice with a minimum of cash. I was almost unanimously elected captain of the first company :

my subs were jolly fellows, chiefly from the civilian class, who subscribed handsomely, and matters were soon in train. There was a little hitch at first about the uniform, as all the men wanted one like that in which I had fought my Indian campaign; but I evaded that by suggesting that it was only used by cavalry, and so we agreed on rifle-green. I appointed my invaluable Stubbs drill-sergeant, and we got on famously. Rumours were afloat about his behaviour, I am sorry to say. Thus, a Quaker, a rabid opponent of the volunteer movement, declared on affirmation, in lieu of oath, that he had seen Stubbs engaged in initiating an awkward squad in the mysteries of the goose-step. "One!" shouted the sergeant, and the legs duly went up. Then Stubbs audaciously said, "Now, gentlemen, unless you promise to stand half a gallon of beer, I sha'n't say Two!" Of course the most obstinate recruit could not stand for an undetermined period with his leg at an angle of 45° , and so they compromised for the beer. But I am inclined to regard this story as a weak invention of the enemy.

Stubbs and I became immense favourites. I did not bother the men with too much drill, but took them out for country marches, and got them to the targets at the earliest possible moment. My civilian friends subscribed for a handsome challenge cup, which promoted emulation and good feeling, and, in a word, A company of the R. P. R. V. was more like a band of schoolboys than stern soldiers. All very wrong, I confess, but I went in for the fun of the thing, and could never be induced to regard the serious side of the matter. I only know that my men proved crack shots, and, as sharp-shooters, would have given a good account of any enemy that dared to land. But in the midst of our frolic we received a heavy discouragement: several companies were formed into an administration battalion, and, through the influence of his brother-in-law, Major Mountchesney was appointed to the command. My anticipations as to mischief were not disappointed, for in two or three days the following order was left at our head-quarters:—

"Battn. O, No. 32.

"The Major commanding the Second Clodshire Administration Battalion will inspect A Co. R. P. R. V. at 5 A.M. on Monday next, *sharp time*. The company to appear on the parade-ground in heavy marching order."

On reading this missive, all my sins of omission stared me in the face, and I felt that my company was not at all in the condition to satisfy a martinet. It was true that their muskets were clean and in good order, but the men were not set up, and marched with a peculiar shamble, of which it is impossible to break men accustomed to the sea. However, I put my trust in Providence, and induced about half the company to promise, as a personal favour, that they would appear on the parade-ground. Precisely at the appointed moment the Major came riding up, and was so preternaturally stiff, that I thought his first order would be

"swallow ramrods." This stiffness of his rendered the looseness of my fellows all the more conspicuous. He spent some time with the men, and performed some manœuvres of which they had hitherto been blessedly ignorant. At length he turned to me.

"Great Ged! sir, this is even worse than I had feared. I was aware that discipline was very lax in your company, but I was not at all prepared for this. Just look at that man, sir!"

And he pointed, with a finger that trembled with passion, at an unfortunate fellow who, for the sake of ease, had left the bottom button of his tunic unfastened. I apologized, and said that the men would produce a more favourable impression if seen at rifle practice; but that set the Major on his hobby-horse at once.

"Don't talk to me, sir, about rifle practice," he spluttered; "if I had my way, not a volunteer should fire a shot for the first twelve months."

I meekly suggested that, if such a law were enforced, there would be very few volunteers; but Major Mountchesney would not listen to me, and rode off in high dudgeon, to send in a lengthened report about the inefficiency of my company. I could do nothing, for he was right from his point of view,—and so, perhaps, was I from mine. Where we differed was, that he wanted to treat every armed man as a true soldier, while I thought it sufficient to teach him the use of his weapon, how to work together, and obey the word of command. But then I had had to do with irregulars in India.

I have no space to describe all the annoyances which the Major brought down on my devoted head, and my fellows would have resigned half a dozen times had I not urged them to refrain out of consideration for me. Still, I more and more felt that Pentgate was not large enough to hold the Major and myself, and that one of us must give way. At this crisis I obtained an unexpected and valuable ally. My cousin, Jack Darcy,—of mine, of ours, of everything and everybody, the darling of the whole army,—who had gained his V. C. by a deed of unexampled bravery, even among that body of brave men, took it into his head to get married. He consequently sold out of the Plungers, of which regiment he was lieutenant-colonel, and was now in town to have his last fling before settling down to the matrimonial curb. To him I applied in my sore strait, and the next train brought him to Pentgate.

"The old humbug!" he said, after listening to my grievances; "I'll pill him. I suppose the feeling against him is pretty general, eh? How many companies have you here?"

"Very general. Two," was my laconic reply.

"Well, do you get the officers together—quietly, mind—and we'll talk the matter over."

The same night the conspirators assembled at my quarters, and we discussed the matter. At length Darcy said,—

"Look here, gentlemen ; I see the way to bowl out Major Martinet ; but before I undertake it, you must pledge me your word not to remonstrate, however extraordinary my conduct may appear to you, and to keep it dark."

This was enthusiastically promised, and Darcy set to work. In the course of a day or two a rumour was afloat that the officers of the R. P. R. V. intended to present their commandant with a testimonial, as a token of their esteem. A visit which Darcy and myself paid to the silversmith of the county town, and an inquiry after patterns of *epergues*, seemed to confirm the report, and a paragraph about the testimonial slipped into the local papers. This had a marked effect on the Major, and at the next parade he deigned to compliment me on the decided improvement in my company. The report was converted into a certainty when Major Mountchesney received a letter in the name of the officers of the R. P. R. V., inviting him to dinner. None were more puzzled than the officers when they heard of this, for they had not the slightest wish to pay for a dinner for their gallant but disagreeable commander. Moreover, they had not been called upon to contribute to the testimonial which it was town-talk would be presented on the occasion. However, they had promised to hold their tongues, and consoled themselves with the thought that time would clear up this as well as other "unrevealed mysteries."

There is a story floating about mess-rooms, that on the occasion of a regimental presentation, the Major pushed the testimonial across the table to the Colonel, who was the recipient, saying, "Colonel, that's the mug." "Oh," the Colonel replied, "this is the jug, is it?" And so the matter ended to their mutual relief. But the R. P. R. V. were not going to hide their candle under a bushel in this way, and the ceremony was as grand as it could be made with our resources. The chair was occupied by Colonel Darcy, as spokesman for the officers, whose feelings overpowered them. The honoured guest of the evening was on his right, and before them was the testimonial, still covered with green baize, but evidently valuable. After the usual patriotic toasts, Darcy proposed to make the speech of the evening. He alluded in the most affecting terms to the urbanity which the Major had constantly displayed, and to the skill he had shown in gaining the good wishes of all with whom he came in contact. Then he passed to the testimonial, which, humble though it was, would, he felt assured, be treasured by the Major as an heirloom. Then dexterously whisking away the green baize with one hand, he raised his glass with the other, and bade us drink the health of our Major.

The cheers which greeted this speech had scarce died away ere we saw the Major turn black in the face, as if he were going into an apoplectic fit. Dashing his hand down among the glasses, he gurgled out, "Great Ged !— You shall hear from me about this ;" and rushed from the room, leaving the testimonial behind him. A glance at the piece of plate, however, explained to us the motive of his flight ; it was really and truly a piece of

Delft plate, with its jagged edges lying, as if in mockery, on a blue velvet cushion. The trick was scandalous, I confess, but we could not refrain from peals of laughter, such as the assembly-rooms had never before heard. Even if the poor Major could have held his ground in Pentgate, which would have been difficult, he cut it away from under him by his own foolish conduct. At six o'clock the next morning the *Pentgate Intelligencer* appeared with a flaming account of the banquet, which could only have been supplied by the Major himself, as the speech he had *not* delivered was given *in extenso*. This was copied into the country papers, and thence found its way to London; and this, in turn, obliged "One who was present" (I wonder who he was?) to state the plain facts of the case, and then—well, there was the deuce and all to pay. The lord-lieutenant took up the cudgels for his brother-in-law. There was a heap of angry correspondence, and the result was that the two companies of R. P. R. V. were broken up. But Major Mountchesney has never shown in the place again, and is popularly supposed to have migrated to Russia, where fellows who insult field officers are sent to Siberia!

Dining the other day at the "Rag," I stumbled over the gouty foot of that distinguished officer, Lieutenant-General Jowler, K.C.B., K.H., K.T.S., and so on for the rest of the alphabet,—who knows every fellow who has been in the army since the field of Culloden. After appeasing the veteran's well-founded wrath, and listening to a string of expletives which seemed to relieve his pain, I asked, in the course of conversation,—

"By-the-bye, General, did you ever come across a Major Mountchesney?"

"Mountchesney? Let me see," he remarked. "Oh yes,—cutting and carving fellow,—not Major, but Surgeon-Major;—took a bullet out of my leg after Salamanca, and did it (never mind what) clumsily too."

The murder was out; only a non-combatant officer could have proved himself so thorough-paced a martinet.

ROYAL FAVOURITES.

PART VII.

BUT Overbury's intemperance led him too far, and he had not, bad as he professed to think her, appreciated to the full the vindictive character of her whom he had now made his bitter enemy. When all this came to the knowledge of Lady Essex, which it did through the enamoured Viscount, she is said to have offered Sir Davy Wood a thousand pounds if he would challenge Overbury and take his life in a duel. Sir Davy had quarrelled with Overbury, and the latter refusing to meet him in the field, Sir Davy meant to "give him the bastinado," which Lady Essex hearing, thought he would be a man fit for her purpose. To her offer he replied, that for all the gold in the world he would not be a hangman, nor take a Christian's blood; but if she would get Rochester's promise, under his hand, or given before a witness, that he would, after it was done, set him at liberty, he would "give him the sooner knocks for her sake." The Countess required time, and soon after sent to him to say that could not be; but that she would, on her life, warrant that he should be conveyed away in safety. To which he answered, "that he might be accounted a great fool, if, upon a woman's word, he went to Tyburn."

Another plan, therefore, was thought safer and surer. By this time the lady's relations, the Howards; and especially her uncle, seem to have become almost as eager as herself to effect her transference from Essex to Rochester; the King, too, had entered warmly into the project, which recommended itself at once as gratifying to the favourite, and as promising to restore peace and quiet to the Court, and to put an end to a state of things which had for some time occasioned his Majesty infinite trouble and vexation. There is every reason to believe, however, that James really thought the marriage with Essex was one which ought to be dissolved: he may have been biassed in forming that opinion by his wishes and partialities; but it is to mistake his character to suppose that he would have taken the part he did throughout the business if such had not been his sincere conviction. Nothing was ever to be made of him except by the tenderest treatment of that conceit of his own understanding, which was his weak, or his weakest point. Here, then, was an officious, obstinate, perverse fellow, who, manifestly for his own ends, persisted in standing in the way of an arrangement in itself eminently reasonable in every point of view. As for Essex, the only party among those entitled to have a voice in the matter who was opposed to the dissolution, there were various considerations which might plausibly enough be represented as putting him out of Court; but, in point of fact, his opposition was not to the dissolution of the marriage, but only to the particular ground upon which it was sought to be dissolved—to the form rather than to the

substance and effect of the judgment sought by his wife. That he and she should ever live together again was out of the question, whatever should come of her suit; it must in reality, therefore, have been nearly as much desired by the one as by the other that their nominal union should be put an end to. Overbury was certainly in possession of some secret by which he could have thrown a formidable obstacle in the way of the divorce. It is clear that he had threatened to take effectual means to prevent it. The getting rid of him became, therefore, a matter of the first importance. He was directed to make himself ready to set out on an embassy to Russia. On his spurning this bribe, however, and declaring that his Majesty had no right to send him into exile, he was immediately committed to the Tower as guilty of a contempt of the royal authority. This was on the 22nd of April, 1613, a few days before the commencement of the proceedings for the divorce before the Court of Delegates.

Lady Essex was now triumphant; he whom she considered as her bitterest and most dangerous enemy was in her power, and the weak and vicious favourite had entirely given himself up to her guidance, consenting to all she proposed, and offering no resistance to the most detestable projects. Sir Thomas was no sooner safely enclosed within the walls of the Tower, than the Lieutenant, Sir W. Waad, by Rochester's means, was replaced by Sir Jervas Elwes; and one Weston, servant to the infamous Mrs. Turner, was appointed to be keeper of the prisoner. Weston was then sent for by Mrs. Turner, when Lady Essex asked him if he would give Sir Thomas a glass of water which should be sent him, and he should be well rewarded. Shortly after, his son, who was apprentice to a haberdasher that served the Countess with fans of feathers and other wares, brought him a glass of water of a yellowish and greenish colour. This he showed to the Lieutenant, "who rebuked him Christianly, and he cast it into a gutter, and brake it." * About a fortnight after, some of Rochester's servants came to inquire how Overbury did, and whether he would like tarts or jelly, which were sent him as coming from Rochester, and which Weston received orders from the Countess not to allow any person but Overbury to eat. In June, Rochester wrote to Overbury, enclosing a white powder, which he desired him to take without fear. "It will make you sick, but fear not; I will make this a means for your delivery, and for the recovery of your health."

Mindful, perhaps, of the old adage—"Dying vipers will bite"—Overbury's persecutors never allowed him to see any of his friends; from which it may be inferred that he possessed some secret which it was dreaded that he might divulge. Every article of his food appears, at one

* Weston's confession. There are two letters in the State Paper Office from Lady Essex to the Lieutenant of the Tower, which she sent with wine and jelly for Overbury.

time or another, to have been drugged; but although he languished, his strength of body carried him on, and his enemies becoming impatient, a dose strong enough to do its fatal work was administered to him on the 14th of September, and the betrayed instrument of Rochester expired in the most fearful torments in his prison on the day before the sentence of nullity of the Essex marriage was pronounced. He was buried in haste and secrecy, without the commonest decency being observed.

The sentence of divorce, it may be observed, was couched in terms bearing as lightly upon Essex as possible; his marriage with the Lady Frances Howard was declared to have been and to be utterly void and of none effect; but he, as well as she, was expressly left free to contract any other marriage. It now remained for the guilty pair to enjoy to the utmost the seeming prosperity which shone upon them. Lord Essex, too happy to be rid of a woman who had for a time disgraced his name and tarnished the restored honour, too lately lost on the scaffold of his unfortunate father, willingly paid back the dower he had received with her from Lord Suffolk, though he was obliged to sell his estate of Benington, in Hertfordshire, to do so; and her future conduct concerned him no longer.

King James now exhibited as much fondness towards Frances Howard as she showed to her lover, and his favour procured her all the adulation she delighted in. She became, more than ever, the idol of his dissipated Court; and the announcement of her intended marriage with the newly-created Earl of Somerset, raised to that rank in order that he might be considered her equal, was received with acclamation. Magnificent preparations were made for the wedding, and the King undertook to give away the beautiful bride.

On St. Stephen's Day, 1613, King James, the Queen, the heads of the Church, and the peers and peeresses of the realm, were assembled in the chapel of the Royal Palace of Whitehall, to witness the marriage of the divorced Lady Essex with the King's favourite. On that same day, in the same place, just eight years before, the King had given away the same bride to a husband whom he may be justly charged with having, in effect, himself divorced. The same King paid the expenses of the second wedding. The same Dean of the Chapel, a Bishop of Bath and Wells, performed both ceremonies. The bride, according to the language of a contemporary writer, was married "in her hair;" that is to say, her hair (which was very beautiful and long) flowing in ringlets to her waist. To be married "in their hair" was the appropriate etiquette of that day for *virgin* brides. The historian Wilson, from being the companion of the Earl of Essex in his campaigns, and the constant inmate of his house, may be supposed to have expressed himself on this occasion according to the views and feelings of his much-injured friend. He writes of the Countess of Somerset, that those "who saw her face might challenge Nature of too much hypocrisy for harbouring so wicked a heart under so

sweet and bewitching a countenance." Nor were the arts fashionable at this time forgotten; they heightened the attractions of the triumphant woman. "All outward adornments," we are told, "to present beauty in her full glory, were not wanting;" among the rest, yellow starch "the invention and foyl of jaundiced complexions, with great cut-wor bands and piccadillies," were adopted by the unhappy Lady Somerset.

As if Robert Carr, too, had been a royal personage and the object of the nation's love, like the ill-fated young prince whom it had just lost, the Court of Whitehall and the City of London thought it necessary all to do homage to the man "whom the King delighted to honour;" and to the disgrace of both, the incense that was offered to the towering favourite on the occasion of his marriage is almost as revolting as the marriage itself. Bacon spent £2,000 upon "the Masque of Flowers, in which grave lawyers spoke the flattering words which were put into the mouths of hyacinths and jonquils. Donne wrote an Eclogue, the following lines from which Dr. Johnson designates as "the poetic propagation of light," and which he adduces as one of the most striking examples of the conceits to be found in the works of the poets belonging to what Dryden calls "the metaphysical school," of which Donne and Cowley were the leaders :—

"Then from those wombs of stars, the bride's bright eyes,
At every glance a constellation flies,
And sows the Court with stars, and doth prevent,
In light and power, the all-eyed firmament.

"First, her eyes kindle other ladies' eyes,
Then from those beams their jewels' lustre rise;
And from their jewels torches do take fire;
And all is warmth, and light, and good desire."

A nuptial sermon was preached by the Dean of Westminster; and one of his hearers tells us, what we might have conjectured, that, like another "soft Dean" who "never mentioned hell to ears polite," the gist of the discourse was the commendation, to use the writer's own words, "of the young couple, glancing also at the praise of the bride's mother whom he styled the *mother-vine*." Donne, in reference to Cupid's conquest over the favourite, writes :—

"Our little Cupid hath sued livery,
And is no more in his minority;
He is admitted now into that breast,
Where the King's counsels and his secrets rest."

The various ceremonies and "little sorceries" incident to marriages at Court were doubtless observed on this occasion; and if the details had been preserved, we should have found that King James had strenuously exerted himself in flinging the bride's left stocking, sewing her up in the sheets, quaffing sack posset, drawing through the wedding ring, playing

a réveille-matin, if he did not also, as he did in compliment to Sir H. Herbert and his lady, visit the newly-married pair before they rose from their bed. We are told by an eye-witness that the King and Queen tasted hippocras and wafers in the chapel with the bride and bridegroom, and that gloves were liberally distributed, and, in particular, that "a very fair" pair of gloves, worth £3, was given to Secretary Winwood.

Though the marriage was celebrated on a *Sunday*, in the evening there was a "gallant Masque of Lords." On comparing the lists of the noble dancers, it will be found that four out of twelve maskers had danced in the Masque of Hymen at the former wedding.* Donne, in writing of the entertainments provided on the occasion, says,—

"The tables groan as though the feast
Would, as the flood, destroy all fowl and beast."

And, by way of curious illustration of the current controversy regarding the truth of the Copernican system, which at that time Bacon disbelieved, and much later Milton doubted, he writes that Copernicus was borne out in his opinions by the general *movement* of men and things in honour of the Earl and Countess of Somerset.

The Corporation of London gave the newly-wedded couple a sumptuous banquet at Merchant Tailors' Hall, to which the whole Court was invited, nine days after their marriage; and when the lady, wishing to go to the festival in great state, borrowed the four superb horses in which Sir Ralph Winwood, the Secretary of State, took pride, he begged her to accept them, as so great a lady should not use anything borrowed. In less than two years the same Sir Ralph Winwood was labouring to discover the suspected murderess of Sir Thomas Overbury. There was a grand procession of equestrians and equipages from Whitehall to the City, and London sent out its swarms to gaze at the courtly array, as it took its glittering way through the thronged streets. It was the evening of the day following Christmas, 1613, and the light of innumerable torches flashed on the jewelled vests and waving plumes of two lines of guests—one of ladies, following the gay and haughty bride; the other of lords, attending on the exulting bridegroom—as they threaded the mazes of the streets from the royal to the City halls, where they were received with such a welcome as should belong only to royalty. At the feast they were served by the most comely of the citizens, selected out of the twelve companies, who wore their "gowns and rich foins." In the evening

* The Masque of the second wedding is still extant; it was composed by one Campion, who also wrote the Masque for the marriage of the Palgrave with Princess Elizabeth. This successful rival of Ben Jonson is now less read or known than even Lilly, Davenant, Shadwell, or Cibber, who pleased sovereigns better, and were more munificently patronized by them, than their respective contemporaries, Shakspeare, Milton, Dryden, and Pope.

there was "a wassaile, two masques, and a play." Nor did the bride and bridegroom return to Whitehall till three o'clock the next morning.

The City Corporation, the East India Company, the Merchant Adventurers, the farmers of the Customs, vied with each other in the costliness of their marriage offerings. The Queen gave silver dishes curiously enamelled. Sir E. Coke, the Chief Justice, presented a basin and cover of silver gilt; his lady a pot of gold. Another sycophant gave a gold warming-pan; another, hangings worth £1,500; another, a sword worth £500, besides its workmanship of enamelled gold, which cost 100 marks; another, a cradle of silver to burn sea-coal; another, candlesticks worth 1,000 marks; another, two orient pearls; another, a fire-shovel, tongs, pokers, creepers, and other chimney furniture, all of silver. The wife of a bishop presented the bride-cake.

For a while all went "merry as a marriage bell," and the progress of the guilty pair was one continuous triumph. They were now, as they conceived, safe from every danger, for the witness of their dark crimes could threaten and reveal no more. The gratitude or policy of Carr at this time, when the King was, as he himself expresses it, "at a dead lift, and at our wits' end for want of money," induced him to make an offering to his royal master of twenty-five thousand pounds, which was graciously accepted.

The death of the Earl of Northampton—uncle to Frances Howard and her too compliant friend, who was thought to be more acquainted with her schemes, and to have forwarded them more than was consistent with the character of an honest man—made a change in affairs; and Lord Suffolk succeeded him as treasurer, while the place of chamberlain was filled up by the newly-created Earl of Somerset, much to the annoyance and vexation of the Queen, whose suspicions had never been set at rest respecting the death of her son, and who had always regarded the favourite with an eye of envy and dislike.

A system of injustice and dishonesty was now established, which placed the whole power of the kingdom in the hands of the reconciled parties: every department, high and low, was confided to their friends, or sold, without hesitation, to the highest bidder. "Thus," says Birch, "Lord Knolles was made Master of the Court of Wards without purchase, because he married a daughter of Lord Suffolk; while Sir Fulk Greville, for the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, gave four thousand pounds to Lady Suffolk and Lady Somerset.

For some time the wind of prosperity was in favour of this band of depredators; but, by their own means, their downfall was preparing. Sir Ralph Winwood was made, by the King himself, who appreciated his services, Secretary of State; and he, a friend of the Queen, kept under and insulted by the aspiring favourite, saw too clearly the game that was playing, and used his utmost efforts to remedy the evils caused by the corrupt management of affairs. Add to this, in the sale of offices, that

of cup-bearer had been obtained by George Villiers, one of the sons of Sir Edward Villiers, of Brookesby, in Leicestershire. This young stranger was all that Carr had been in his early youth, when his graces made such an impression on the King; and to beauty of person he added a polish of manner and a freshness of intellect which could not fail to please the sovereign. James was so enraptured with his new courtier, that he did not conceal the pleasure he took in his society; so much so, that the Earls of Bedford, Pembroke, and Hertford, before whom he uttered his eulogiums, conceived at once a plan of making the young man a rival to Somerset.

These noblemen consulted together, and took the Queen into their counsels, who, though she foresaw the danger of introducing a new enemy, who would probably become as powerful as the old, could not but acknowledge that the removal of the present tyrant was worth a trial. From this juncture the star of Somerset began to wane, and a new and powerful party sprang up, attached to the rising fortunes of the new favourite, which threatened soon to destroy his influence.

When Somerset sold the office of cup-bearer to George Villiers, he appears to have forgotten that another might supplant him in the favour of a king who dwelt on "good looks and handsome accoutrements." The cup-bearer was a dangerous rival. Care and anxiety, and the gnawings of conscience, had greatly changed the once joyous, careless, and free tone of Somerset's character; and probably the King had begun to weary of him, even before he beheld his rival. The influence of Frances over her husband he felt had greatly weaned him from himself, and his assumption of authority disgusted him; while certain state secrets, of which the Earl is supposed to have been the possessor, rendered him an object of fear.

The enemies of Somerset also laboured strenuously to set up Villiers as his rival; but James had formed a cunning plan of taking no one to his favour unless specially recommended by the Queen, "that if she should complain afterwards of the *dear one*, he might make answer, 'It is along of yourself, for you commended him unto me.' " The task of gaining the Queen was committed to Archbishop Abbot, and after long refusing she consented with these prophetic words,—“My lord, you know not what you desire. If Villiers gain the royal favour, we shall all be sufferers; I shall not be spared more than others; the King will teach him to treat us all with pride and contempt.”

Somerset saw that his power was decaying; he was aware of his master's caprice, and trembled for the consequences. He was not so blind to his danger as Court favourites have usually been, and taking the advantage of a moment's kindness, he threw himself at the feet of the King, told him he was beset with enemies, who would not fail to invent some crime which they would lay to his charge, and entreated him to grant him a free pardon, signed and sealed, for all offences which he might ever have committed. James had his own reasons for consenting to this bold request,

and intended to have done so to the full ; but the Queen became aware of the scheme, and before the Great Seal was affixed to the document, prevented its taking effect.

The King wished the two favourites to live in harmony, but Somerset haughtily spurned the advances of Villiers. According to Weldon, the new cup-bearer waited upon the chamberlain, and told him that he desired to be his "servant and creature," and to take his Court preferment wholly under his power ; and Somerset frankly replied, "I will have none of your service, and you shall have none of my favour : I will, if I can, break your neck." "Had Somerset only complied with Villiers," continues Weldon, "Overbury's death had still been raked up in his own ashes." The Court, therefore, was soon divided into two parties.

In the mean time a fearful discovery was going on. Some dark suspicions had long been whispered ; but it was not till the latter end of July, 1615, that information accidentally reached some members of the Government that Overbury had been unfairly made away with. One after another witnesses appeared, proofs were found of the part that Somerset and his Countess had played in the murder of Sir Thomas, and no doubt could remain of their guilt. Still, the chief object of the investigation—secretly carried on by his enemies—was not aware of the gulf beneath his feet, and imagined himself yet secure in the favour of his royal friend. The King's duplicity on this occasion is almost incredible, and is sufficient alone to show the character of James in its true colours, and cover him with obloquy, if almost every action of his life had not already done so. Somerset was with the King at Royston at the very moment when circumstances had brought the guilt of Overbury's murder so near to the Earl and Countess, that James directed Chief Justice Coke to make out a warrant for their committal. The royal hypocrite was in the act of embracing the lost Earl with the appearance of the utmost tenderness, when the messenger from the Lord Chief Justice came to arrest him. Somerset complained loudly of the indignity offered to the King by his being arrested in the royal presence, and exclaimed that never had such an affront been offered to a peer of England. "Nay, man," said the King, wheedlingly, "if Coke sends for me, I must go." He then hung about his neck, slapping his cheeks, saying, "For God's sake, when shall I see thee again ? On my soul, I shall neither eat nor sleep until you come again !" The Earl told him, "On Monday." "For God's sake, let me !" said James. "Shall I ? shall I ?" and lolled about his neck ; "then for God's sake, give thy lady this kiss for me," doing the same at the stair's head, the middle, and the foot of the stairs. The unhappy favourite departed ; yet he was not in his coach when the King used these very words, which were repeated to Sir A. Weldon,—“Now, the deil gae with thee, for I will never see thy face mair.” This was at ten o'clock in the morning. About three in the afternoon the Lord Chief Justice arrived at Royston, and to him James *complained* that Somerset and his wife had made him a go-between in their

adultery and murder. He commanded him, with all the scrutiny possible, to search into the bottom of the foul conspiracy, and to spare no man, how great soever. And, in conclusion, he said to Coke, "God's curse be upon you and yours if you spare any of them! and God's curse be upon me and mine if I pardon any one of them!"*

It needed not the King's exhortation to induce the Chief Justice to sift the matter to the bottom, and Coke, who had many motives besides the love of justice, was not idle. He had owed many previous obligations to Somerset, but he saw that the Earl could never again be of use to him. He and his brother commissioners took *three hundred* examinations, and a dreadful tissue of iniquity was speedily unravelled.

Somerset was committed to the Tower on the 18th October, 1615, Richard Weston having made a full confession; but the Countess, being shortly about to become a mother, was for the time placed under surveillance. Sir Jervas Elwes, Turner, Franklin, and Weston were convicted and hanged during the month of November. On the 6th April, 1616, we learn from Mr. Chamberlain that "the Lady of Somerset was committed to the Tower on so short warning, that she had scant leisure to shed a few tears over her little daughter at the parting; otherwise she carried herself every way constantly enough, saving that she did passionately deprecate and entreat the Lieutenant that she might not be lodged in Sir Thomas Overbury's lodging."

Somewhat less than three years had elapsed since that gorgeous display of wedding gifts and entertainments already noticed, when, on the 24th and 25th of May, in the year 1616, a still more imposing spectacle occurred, in which the principal actors in the former scenes again engrossed the eyes and ears of the public. On the first of these days the Countess of Somerset, and on the second the Earl, held up their hands in Westminster Hall, where all the nobles and courtiers of the realm, and a multitude of more humble bystanders, perhaps the very individuals who had formerly echoed their praises, or joined chorus in their epithalamiums, were now assembled to hear them answer upon their arraignments for the crime of murder. All places of public business and amusement were deserted during these proceedings, so intense was the curiosity thus excited. For not only was Somerset charged with the murder of his former friend, but Coke openly accused him of that of the Prince, and thus spread horror and consternation throughout the kingdom. The Queen caught the alarm; and it was soon confidently asserted that a plot had been formed, not inferior to the Gunpowder treason, to poison her, her son, Prince Charles, and the Prince Palatine, in order that the Princess Elizabeth might be married to a son of Lord Suffolk, the brother of Frances Howard.

* Rushworth : R. Coke.

The interest of the trials was increased by feelings of a superstitious nature; for at the previous arraignment of Mrs. Turner, whom the Countess calls in a letter "sweet Turner," some mysterious articles were introduced which had been seized in the study of the noted astrologer, Dr. Forman. This magician is called by the Countess, in a letter, "dear father," and she subscribes herself, "your affectionate daughter." He supplied her with philters to chill the love of Lord Essex for her, and to kindle that of the Earl of Somerset. The articles consisted of enchanted papers and "waxen figures," a piece of human skin, and a black scarf full of white crosses. A roll of devils' names had been produced at Mrs. Turner's trial, just before a crash was heard from one of the scaffolds which were erected round the hall: this sudden noise, we are told, caused "great fear, tumult, and confusion among all the spectators, every one fearing as if the devil had been present, and was grown angry to have his workmanship showed by such as were not his scholars." There was also produced a list on parchment, written by Forman, signifying "what ladies loved what lords" in the Court. The Lord Chief Justice grasped this startling document, glanced his eye over it, and then insisted that it should not be read. People immediately said that the first name on the list was that of Coke's own wife, the Lady Hatton.

Writers, to whom every minute particular of these trials seems to have been matter of the deepest interest, relate that Lady Somerset wore a dress of "black tammell, a cypress chaperon, a ruff and cuffs of cobweb lawn." On taking her place, the Countess "made three reverences to his Grace and the peers." The Lord High Steward having explained the object of the proceedings, the Clerk of the Crown said, "Frances, Countess of Somerset, hold up your hand." She did so, and continued holding it up till the Lieutenant of the Tower told her to put it down. The indictment was then read. Whilst it was reading, a deadly paleness spread itself over her countenance,—she trembled, and shed some tears. At the part where the name of Weston, the actual perpetrator of the murder of Sir T. Overbury, was first mentioned, her courage forsook her. She put her fan before her face, and there, in horror and agony, held it, covering her face till the reading of the indictment was concluded. On being called to plead, the Countess, making an obeisance, answered, Guilty, "with a low voice, but wonderful fearful." When asked if she had any cause to allege why sentence of death should not be pronounced on her, she answered, "I can much aggravate, but cannot extenuate my fault: I desire mercy, and that the Lords will intercede for me to the King." This she spoke "so low, humbly, and fearfully," that Sir Francis Bacon, then attorney-general, who sat near her, was obliged to repeat the words to the Lord High Steward. Sentence of death was then passed; but in passing it, the last-named functionary told the beautiful but guilty woman, who looked faint, and sick, and spiritless, and trembled excessively, "Since the Lords have heard with what humility and grief you have confessed the fact, I do not

doubt they will signify so much to the King, and mediate for his grace towards you."

An eye-witness observes, that the Countess, upon her arraignment, "won pity by her sober demeanour, which, in my opinion, was more curious and confident than was fit for a lady in such distress; and yet she shed, or made show of, some tears divers times." Another eye-witness writes, "The Countess, after sentence given, in a most humble, yet not base manner, besought the Lord High Steward, and then likewise the rest of the Lords, that they would be pleased to mediate his Majesty on her behalf for his gracious favour and mercy, which they promised to do; and then, expressing her inward sorrow by the many tears she shed, departed."

Camden records the universal commiseration of the spectators. In those times, as on various occasions at the present day, and probably as long as human nature endures, the sympathies of mankind for a spectacle of suffering humanity (especially in the instance of a lovely woman overwhelmed by contrition and fear of death) immediately presented to the eyes, outweighed in strength the sentiments of justice, and effaced the recollection of a crime marked by extraordinary malice and cruelty.

Lord Essex, the former husband of the Countess, was present at her trial, but seemed purposely kept out of public observation and the sight of the wife of his boyhood.

On the next day, the trial of the once powerful favourite took place. The love of personal decoration, for which Somerset was remarkable, displayed itself in that attention to dress, by which his early fortunes had been so much advanced. The Earl appeared at the bar in the cloak and George, and other insignia of the Order of the Garter. He was further apparelled "in a plain black satin suit, laid with two white laces in a seam; a gown of orient velvet, lined with unshorn; all the sleeves laid with satin lace; a pair of gloves with satin tops; his hair curled." It was observed that his "visage was pale, his beard long, his eyes sunk in his head." Somerset pleaded "Not guilty" to the indictment thus solemnly opened by Serjeant Montague:—"My Lord High Steward of England, and you, my lords, this cannot but be a heavy spectacle unto you, to see that man, that not long since, in great place, with a white staff, went before the King, now at this bar hold up his hand for blood; but this is the change of fortune—nay, I might better say, the hand of God, and work of justice, which is the King's honour." The prisoner, who displayed far more ability than he had ever been supposed to possess, maintained his innocence, and defended himself so ably that the trial lasted eleven hours. The peers returned a verdict of Guilty, and Somerset, when brought again to the bar, and asked whether he had anything to say why judgment of death should not be given against him, answered, "The sentence that is passed upon me must be just; I only desire a death according to my degree. My lords the peers, I beseech you, as you have been the judges of this day, so you will be my inter-

cessors." Then my Lord Steward broke his staff, the court dissolved, and the prisoner was carried away.

Towards the concluding part of the trial, the dramatic effect of the scene was increased by a multitude of torches casting a glimmering light through the high and vaulted roofs of the hall, and making transiently visible the countenances of the judges, the councillors, the peers, peeresses, and the mixed audience that crowded the lofty scaffoldings. It was at this period that the Earl of Somerset commenced his defence. On various great occasions he had been set up as the idol to be admired of all eyes. He was still wearing the ensigns of the highest order of knighthood, but was now pleading for his life. He had to exculpate himself from a charge of deep and mysterious malignity. His own wife had confessed her guilt. It was supposed by some that he would be overwhelmed by the consciousness of crime, or the sense of shame. It was doubted whether he had abilities to make any impression on a public assembly. Suspicions were abroad that, in a moment of despair, he would make revelations that would cause the king to tremble on his throne. Repeated attempts were made, during the trial, by the Lord High Steward (Ellesmere) to shake his firmness, and divert him from indicating his innocence, by plainly telling him that his life would be spared or not, according as he made a confession or demanded a verdict. Nevertheless, as an eye-witness observes, "A thing worthy of note in him was his constancy and undaunted carriage in all the time of his arraignment, which, as it began, so it did continue to the end, without any change or alteration." Amidst the mixed expectations of the audience, the Earl of Somerset began a speech, in which he displayed a resolution of demeanour and a flow of natural eloquence that might have become a suffering patriot. Among many of the bystanders he produced an impression of his innocence. Other orations have been spoken in the storied hall of Westminster, with the eloquence of which the Earl's speech will not admit for a moment of being compared; but the assemblies which have filled its spacious fabric from its area to its roof were not, perhaps, moved with more thrilling excitement, even by the voice of Strafford, or Burke, or Sheridan, than by the Earl of Somerset pleading for his life.

Though the inferior actors in this horrible tragedy suffered a merited punishment for their crimes, the two chief actors were pardoned,—that is to say, the Countess received a remission of her sentence on the 17th July following; but that which was sent to the Earl was refused by him. He was, he said, an innocent and injured man, and would accept nothing less than a reversal of the judgment. This could not be granted; and although he might have had his pardon, with all his jewels restored to him, and an allowance of £4,000 a year, Lord and Lady Somerset continued to live together prisoners in the Tower until the 18th January, 1632, when the King, by order in Council, set them at liberty, confining them, however, to either Grayes or Cowsham, two houses of Lord Wallingford's, in Oxfordshire, and a distance of three miles from either of them.

Dissatisfied with Buckingham, King James, in the last year of his reign, renewed his correspondence with Somerset, and gave him hopes of a complete restoration to favour. James also promised to restore Somerset's property, but died before he did so; and Somerset, vainly petitioning Charles to fulfil his father's promise, was reduced to great poverty and obscurity. Every spark of that passion which had led him to crime and danger was extinguished in his breast, and for the future he looked upon his Countess as a fiend who had betrayed and ruined him. The love which had caused him and his wife, Wilson tells us, "to break through all restraints of decency or shame, declined in the private life to which they were condemned, until they loathed the sight of each other; and for long, though residing in the same house, they lived as strangers, and never met again." At length, in 1632, death put an end to her shame and her despair; she expired, after a lingering and painful illness, leaving one daughter, who was brought up in careful ignorance of the crimes of her parents. Anne Carr, at the death of her wretched mother, was young, beautiful, and full of kindness and amiability. William Lord Russell, afterwards Earl and Duke of Bedford, became attached to her. His father, naturally averse to an alliance with the Somersets, desired him to choose a wife out of any family but that. Opposition only strengthened their attachment. The King sent the Duke of Lennox to Bedford to intercede for the young couple, who at length consented, provided Somerset gave a fortune of £12,000 with his daughter. To do this, the latter was forced to sell his house at Chiswick, his plate, jewels, and furniture; and the once rich and profuse favourite, by thus reducing himself to complete poverty, secured the happiness of his beloved child, who married Lord Russell in 1637, and became the mother of that William Lord Russell who died on the scaffold in 1683. The dreadful antecedents of her parents' career had been so sedulously concealed from the knowledge of Lady Russell, that some time after her marriage she was found in a swoon on the floor, having read in a pamphlet an account of the frightful crimes of which her father and mother had been convicted.

The Earl of Somerset survived his wife until the year 1645: he was buried in St. Paul's, Covent Garden. Such a trait as the sacrifice of all he possessed to insure the union of his daughter with the object of her affections, goes far to render the supposition probable that, but for his misfortune in meeting with Frances Howard, Carr might not have been so guilty as temptation made him. The Earl appeared both humble and penitent in his fall, and his charming daughter shines out amidst the darkness of his destiny like a bright guiding star, promising him forgiveness.

A ROMANCE OF WIMBLEDON COMMON.

"TELL me exactly what was said—as nearly as you can recollect, the very words employed."

This sentence came from a young officer in the uniform of the Coldstream Guards, as it was worn in the last quarter of the last century. He was pale, evidently from excitement, but he strove to suppress his feelings as he addressed a beautiful girl, dressed in the quaint morning costume then fashionable. They stood together in a large gallery, filled with sculptural works—the masterpieces of Greek art—several being casts; but mingled with them were busts and figures, more or less perfect, unquestionably of antique carving.

"Charlotte," added the young man, with painful earnestness, as he noticed his companion's hesitation, "in a case like this there must be no reserve between man and wife. I am able to bear anything, but it is impossible for me to act at all in the matter until I have ascertained the truth fully. What did Huntley say? Out with it, for God's sake!"

"Now, my dear Charles!" exclaimed the young wife, placing her hand affectionately on her husband's shoulder, and gazing with tenderness—not, however, unmingled with anxiety—into his troubled face, "you must know that I never could believe that you were to blame; but my family have ever been characterized by the readiness—of its male members at least—to rush into quarrels, and they, of course, do not approve of the conduct of persons who may seem more peaceably disposed."

"What did Huntley say, Charlotte?" was repeated impatiently.

"He said, Charles, the Duke had been told that some one at Daubigny Club had made an offensive speech in your hearing, of which you had taken no notice; and that His Royal Highness had replied, that such conduct was unworthy of an officer and a gentleman."

"Did he say anything else?" sharply inquired the Guardsman, his lip now almost as pale as his cheek.

"He did say something else, Charles, which both my father and brother have commented on in a way that has pained me greatly."

"What was it? I must hear it, Charlotte."

"The Duke said," she added, slowly, and with evident reluctance "‘*The Lennoxes won't fight.*’"

The young man started as if he had been stung to the heart, his whole frame trembling with excitement. There was a pause of a few minutes, of almost equal suffering for both; for the lady had set herself task to which she could only be reconciled by its imperative necessity: but the honour of her husband had been called in question, and she, with the proverbial courage of her race, had determined that it should be vindicated and vindicated in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

"Do nothing rash, dearest," she said, gravely, yet with inexpressible tenderness. "I am well aware that these unpleasant proceedings arise out of extreme partisanship. Your uncle has excited intense hostility among all the political friends of the Prince of Wales, by what they call his abandonment of their party, and Huntley is almost as close with the Prince as the Duke. There is nothing surprising in either adopting the Prince's prejudices against the friend and colleague of the detested minister; but every one, my dear Charles, capable of a rational judgment, must be ready to acknowledge, that this attempt to blast the character of a young soldier, because he happens to be the offender's next of kin, is as cruel as it is infamous."

"Good-bye, Charlotte." He could not have heard what had been so sensibly and so kindly expressed; indeed, his look was that of a man in a frightful dream.

His wife looked wistfully into his pallid face, took his hand, threw the other arm round his neck, and affectionately offered her cheek for his parting salute.

"No, Charlotte," muttered the officer, with a quivering voice; "I shall not consider myself worthy your caress till I have established my reputation for courage, on a foundation no political partisanship can shake."

The next moment he was fondly clasped in the embrace of his impulsive wife, who kissed his lips passionately, then dashed away the tear that trembled on her lashes, as in a choking voice she once more wished him "good-bye!"

He hurried from the gallery, and down the staircase, and passed along the hall into the street. The mansion he had quitted was familiar to the members of the fashionable world as "Richmond House." It stood conspicuously beyond Whitehall, at the entrance of Parliament Street. Some indications of it may be seen in one or two of Canaletti's pictures, in which he strove to render a few of the Thames mansions as interesting as the Venetian palaces on the Grand Canal; but with limited success. These pictures, and an old print, are all the vestiges that remain of this fine old town house—a house dear not only to antiquarian gossips, but to all British artists; for the gallery of sculpture with which it was then enriched, having been liberally thrown open to whomsoever desired to profit by a study of the best examples of design, caused the revival of English painting.

Muttering, "*The Lennoxes won't fight!*" the young officer presently crossed from Whitehall to the Horse Guards, mechanically returning the salute of a sergeant and two privates of his regiment he passed, as he made his way to the parade. He arrived just in time to fall in with his company, as a battalion was about to be inspected by the colonel.

It was a bright May morning. The subalterns hurried anxiously to their places; the adjutant and lieutenant-colonels were more than usually scrutinizing and fussy; indeed, the field officers generally appeared to have an increased sense of the responsibilities of command, as they marched up

and down together in little groups while the men were falling in. No one of them accosted their comrade who had just appeared on the parade. This was not because they were unaware of his presence;—the majority had not only seen him, but were thinking of him; and with more than one of the groups he was the subject of conversation.

A very fiery-faced major every now and then threw a glance of contempt in his direction, as he gossiped with a brother officer of his own standing in the service, but apparently of much less experience; for the side curls of one were rapidly becoming grey, while those of the other were a rich chestnut.

"The corps will become the laughingstock of the army, if this be permitted," observed the stout major. "The Coldstreams have a fighting reputation to maintain, and, by the god of war, it must be maintained."

"I'm sorry for Lennox," said the other. "The lad is but a sort of scapegoat for his uncle, the Master of the Ordnance."

"Oh, ah, yes. I remember. The old Duke had a quarrel with somebody, and backed out,—eh? Wasn't that it, Major?"

"But that is not all. His Grace was a thick and thin supporter of Charley Fox; moreover a leader of the Constitutional Society, and president of the Convention that met at the St. Alban's Tavern. All of a sudden he veered right round to the opposite point of the political compass, and became as zealous for that lanky young fellow, Billy Pitt. By the god of war, he not only turned his rear on his old friends, but when some of them taunted him with his apostasy, he talked big. In the House of Lords he made a personal attack on Lord ——. Of course, a challenge was the result. Every one expected that the Master of the Ordnance would do credit to the service. But the Duke did not choose to smell powder even in a quarrel of his own seeking. By the god of war, Major, he apologized!"

A movement among the officers who were not with their men put a stop to this conversation, and the two majors proceeded rapidly to their posts.

A young man of about six-and-twenty, of handsome features, tall and well-proportioned, now approached as the regiment saluted. He was the colonel-in-chief; and being, moreover, the second son of the King, was popular both with officers and men. Perhaps this was not entirely due to his exalted position, or to his acknowledged military influence. The royal Duke was known to be generous, and affected a frank nature,—qualities held in high appreciation in the guard-room as well as at the mess. He not only strove to display the most endearing soldierly virtues, but studied to express the most popular sentiments.

All the manoeuvres usual at an inspection were performed by the regiment, evidently to the satisfaction of the royal colonel. He more than once was heard to express his sense of its efficiency in very flattering terms. In truth, the Coldstreams were then the finest of the Foot Guards, and in as perfect a state of discipline as any in the British army.

Scarcely was the last movement completed, when, very much to the surprise of every one present, one of the captains was seen to leave his company, and walk straight to the colonel-in-chief, whom he saluted. The Duke stared.

"Will your Royal Highness be pleased to inform me," said the young officer, in a distinct voice, "whether your Royal Highness has stated that I have submitted, at Daubigny's Club, to language which no officer or gentleman ought to have borne?"

The whole regiment could see the questioner, and a large number, both officers and men, could hear the question. A proceeding so unexpected necessarily produced a great effect, and all waited with profound interest for the reply.

"Captain Lennox, go back to your post," was all that the colonel-in-chief condescended to give in the way of answer to the audacious request. The young officer again saluted his colonel, and returned to his company. No one uttered a word. A smile played round the lips of some of his brother officers, but the majority looked grave.

Presently the regiment was dismissed, and the men were marched off to their barracks. The parade was cleared. One officer remained there. He was almost as pale as when he was standing in the gallery of Richmond House, listening to the startling communication that had there been revealed to him by his anxious wife; but an air of stern determination had been impressed on his delicate features, which they had not then exhibited. He marched slowly up and down, looking occasionally towards a door in the adjacent building, as if he expected some one to come to him from thence. He was right. In a few minutes a colour sergeant came from that door, saluted him, and announced that His Royal Highness had sent for him to the orderly-room. He passed through the door he had been watching, and soon found himself in the well-known apartment. The Duke was there, with a few of the superior officers of the regiment. All looked as grave as if they had been summoned on a court-martial.

"Captain Lennox," said the colonel-in-chief, somewhat haughtily, "I have done myself the honour of sending for you, in consequence of the question you were so good as to put to me on parade, merely to state that when my military business is over, I always wear a brown coat, and desire to be treated solely as a private gentleman."

"I feel much gratified by this signal mark of your Royal Highness's goodness," replied the young captain, with a bearing equally dignified, and in a tone equally high; "and after I have made some necessary inquiries, I will avail myself of your Royal Highness's condescension, by forwarding your Royal Highness a private communication."

He made his bow, and left the room.

A few days later, two distinguished-looking men were sitting close together beside a table covered with green baize. Both were dressed in the

fashion of the time; but one wore a Court suit, and the other a military uniform. Their hair as well as their garments had evidently been arranged as if for an occasion of ceremony. They looked as though they were diplomatists of the first rank, who had met to consider and arrange matters of the very deepest interest; and so they were. Two noblemen better qualified to fill such responsible posts could not easily have been found in England, and their business was of the profoundest interest. It was not a cold question of boundaries, or of national pretensions; it was an affair of life and death.

The civilian was the Earl of Winchelsea, and he sat in his own dining-room, with full-length portraits of his distinguished predecessors looking down upon him as large as life, bearing about them abundant evidence of the official greatness to which they had attained. One had been vice-chamberlain and envoy extraordinary; a second had also been a diplomatist, a groom of the bedchamber, and a master of the robes; a third had been comptroller of the household, a lord of the Admiralty, and president of the council; and a fourth, speaker of the House of Commons and secretary of state.

There they were, striving to look as if they felt the mottoes on their armorial bearings, "*Virtus tutissima cassis*," and "*Nil conscire sibi*," but looking it with a far more gloomy expression than seemed necessary. In short, they were "the black funereal Finches" of Walpole,—in speech the satirical Horace might have added, chaff finches; while their pretensions to literature, as indicated by the Pegasus in their coat armour, proved only that they had thoroughly qualified themselves to ride the high horse in any direction but that of literature.

The military officer was Lord Rawdon, then recently raised to the peerage,—a young nobleman of singular promise, which he subsequently realized by those services that procured for him his better known titles of Moira and Hastings.

They were in a dining-room of Lord Winchelsea's town house, which bore a family likeness in its excessive dulness to the dining-rooms of great men in England, as they were furnished in the year 1789. Lord Winchelsea had invited Lord Rawdon to confer there with him on the very important business they had been specially elected to arrange. This was a duel; but this duel differed from all others that had come within their experience. It was a duel between a commoner and a prince of the blood. It might have been advanced that the former was the next heir to a dukedom, and was descended from a king of England. Still there remained a very large margin between the position of the second son of the reigning sovereign, and the descendant of one of the mistresses of "the Merry Monarch." The difference, great as it was, had, however, been lost sight of by the superior. He had put himself in the wrong with his inferior, and had, therefore, placed himself on his level.

"Everything has been done, my lord," observed Lord Winchelsea,

with the earnest gravity of a judge summing up a criminal case. "The Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox [though a captain in the Coldstream Guards, he held the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the army] my principal, has written to all the members of the Daubigny Club, to ask them if they had heard any words spoken in his presence which were unbecoming an officer and a gentleman to hear, and stating that no answer would be considered a denial. There has been no reply whatever."

"My dear Lord Winchelsea," exclaimed Lord Rawdon, with a cordiality that contrasted strongly with the stately coldness of his senior, "the members of the Daubigny don't like to commit themselves. Your lordship's at liberty to draw what inference you please from their reluctance to put pen to paper. You may lead a horse to a pond, as everybody knows, but you can't make him drink. These gentlemen are wise enough to refrain from black and white. It's no concern of theirs. Why should they mix themselves up in the quarrel? Besides, my dear lord, in all frankness, I suspect there are other reasons."

"Your lordship alludes to the unpopularity of the Lennox family," said the other. "Surely, my lord, you will agree with me, it's hard that Colonel Lennox should suffer obloquy because his kinsman is an influential member of the administration that passed the Regency Bill."

"You see, my dear Lord Winchelsea," replied his visitor, almost affectionately, "the colonel voted with ministers in the house; and being, as it were, one of the party with his uncle, the master of the ordnance, who carried that very objectionable measure through the legislature, as a matter of course he has excited the displeasure of that estimable prince, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and all those nearest and dearest to my royal friend; and, as the most natural thing in the world, my dear Lord Winchelsea, his next brother shares His Royal Highness's sentiments. Will your lordship do me the honour to take a pinch of snuff?"

A gold snuff-box was laid on the table, and Lord Winchelsea gravely helped himself, gravely sneezed, and gravely pocketed his handkerchief, after it had performed what seemed to be the gravest part in the ceremony.

"This I had from the Prince," he said, exultantly, as he took a pinch. "His Royal Highness mixes his own snuff as he brings together his friends, selecting the very best materials that are to be had for love or money."

"I hope the affectionate obligations of His Royal Highness are not quite so heavy as his pecuniary ones," observed his host, with marked emphasis.

"Oh, my dear lord, that's of no account at all," cried the younger negotiator, laughingly. "The heir-apparent of the throne of such an empire as Great Britain must be as able to pay his debts of love as his debts of honour. His *fair* creditors will be content with their security, anyhow."

Lord Rawdon's hilarity was as hearty as it was jovial, but it did not move a smile on the serious aspect of his senior.

"My best wishes attend my future sovereign, of course ; particularly," he added, significantly, "for his speedy exit from the prize ring and the betting course."

"Ha ! ha ! to be sure, my dear lord, and from such unworthy company as Hanger, Barrymore, and—and RAWDON ;" and the young nobleman burst out into another hearty cachinnation.

"Nay ; it is not for me to take exceptions to the friends of the Prince of Wales," observed the other, with increased solemnity ; "and if all of them were as unexceptionable as my Lord Rawdon—"

"Thanks, my dear Lord Winchelsea. Take another pinch of His Royal Highness's mixture ;" and with sparkling eyes he pushed the box across the green baize ; with the gravity he had so rigorously maintained, the last of the funeral Finches accepted the proffered courtesy, and went through the social ceremonial with the same cold stateliness of manner, even to the bow with which he returned the box.

"And now let us keep to business," said his visitor, as he again indulged in the fashionable luxury. "The short and the long of it is this : the royal Duke, for whom I have the honour of appearing at this conference, is stated to have said something at which your lordship's friend, the Honourable Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, M.P., has taken offence."

"Just so."

"Nothing could be more natural, and the colonel demands satisfaction of His Royal Highness."

"Just so."

"Nothing could be more natural ; and I have the honour of appearing here as the friend of His Royal Highness, to say that satisfaction he shall have."

"Well, I was in hopes that when His Royal Highness was made aware that he had committed an error, he would have exhibited the princely magnanimity of acknowledging it, and have expressed his regret."

"Oh ! the devil you did ! Then, my dear lord, you never were more entirely wrong in all your life. My illustrious friend, perhaps, is not quite sure he has committed an error. Anyhow, he won't apologize ; that's flat. Such conduct may be all very proper in a master of the ordnance, but it isn't to be thought of in a prince of the blood, holding a commission in His Majesty's service as colonel-in-chief of the Coldstream Guards."

Lord Winchelsea looked severely grave, but said nothing.

"So my business here is to inform your lordship that my illustrious friend means fighting,—and nothing else."

"Pistols ?"

"Pistols."

"The place ?"

"Wimbledon Common."

"The time?"

"To-morrow morning, at five precisely."

Both simultaneously rose from their seats. Lord Rawdon bowed with his cocked hat in his hand, and a smile on his pleasant face, like an actor who knows that he has played his part well. Lord Winchelsea bowed like a minister retiring from the King's cabinet with a painful sense of responsibility. The negotiation was over.

The following morning, for the 26th of May, was rather cold. At least, it seemed to wear a cheerless aspect when seen through a partial mist on an unenclosed stretch of barren heath, that was in a great measure covered with furze and brambles. The common presented a dreary aspect at most times,—particularly in some of the more desolate spots, from which no house could be seen; the only sign of humanity being a gallows in the distance, where the skeleton of the highwayman who had long made the neighbourhood notorious for his depredations, hung in chains.

Early as it was, and uninviting as the prospect there might be, the morning and the place appeared to have attractions sufficiently powerful to make several gentlemen leave their comfortable beds for a stroll in that direction. They could not, however, have come on foot, for not more than a quarter of a mile off, in different directions, stood two empty post-chaises,—the post-boys in their saddles, the horses standing still.

In an open space, almost screened from observation by tall bushes, were the only other figures in the landscape. Of these, two gentlemen remained apart, at a distance from each other of about twenty yards. The one was an elegant looking young man, of delicate features, in the ordinary morning costume of gentlemen; the other a man of about the same age, but of commanding figure. He wore a long brown coat, the cocked hat of the period, and riding-boots. Two other gentlemen, also in fashionable overcoats and cocked hats, were close together a little way off,—one making measured paces over the turf. At a little distance two other persons sat on the grass, looking on. Each had a mahogany box beside him, and each wore the professional suit of black, and pale studious face of London surgeons in extensive practice.

"Now, my dear lord, everything is satisfactorily arranged," observed Lord Rawdon, with the air of a gallant asking a partner to dance. "Do me the favour to place your man at that spot. The pistols we have examined and selected. At the signal, you know, both will fire. I will now place His Royal Highness."

Lord Winchelsea at once proceeded to his principal, gave him one of the weapons, and led him to the place indicated. Lord Rawdon, with quite a sunny countenance and an elastic step, advanced to his principal, and with a bow placed a pistol in his hand. He whispered,—

"Your Royal Highness, I see, is cool,—beautifully cool; but don't be in a hurry."

The other second said, in a low voice, "Remember you have no alternative;—keep your hand steady."

The seconds moved away; the surgeons opened their cases; the principals stood opposite to each other, pistol in hand, at a distance of twelve paces, waiting for the signal. Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox did not look pale that morning as he had appeared when going to the parade. His expression of his face was calm, but almost as severe as that of his second. He muttered to himself, "The Lennoxes won't fight!" and gazed on his opponent as if selecting a spot at which to aim.

The Duke regarded him with studied indifference; yet it is probable that His Royal Highness was not so insensible to his position as he seemed. He was ambitious of becoming a great commander, and of directing armies in Continental warfare, like the Archdukes of Austria, and other princely generals of past and present times; but he knew that had he attempted to avoid the encounter in which he found himself engaged, he must have abandoned all hope of gaining the confidence of the men and officers he desired to command. Nevertheless his feelings must have been far from cordial towards his antagonist, for having forced him into what must be considered a false position.

"Fire!" cried Lord Rawdon.

One report only was heard. The surgeons started forward; the seconds were equally on the alert.

One of the Duke's side curls was seen to shake. Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox had discharged his pistol, but His Royal Highness stood erect with his loaded pistol in his hand.

"Enough has been done," exclaimed Lord Rawdon; his face radiant with gratification.

"But His Royal Highness has not fired!" cried Colonel Lennox.

"It was not the Duke's intention to fire," replied His Royal Highness's second, evidently in the best possible humour with himself and everybody. "My illustrious friend never had any feeling of animosity against Colonel Lennox, and came out at his invitation, with no other desire than to give him satisfaction."

"I hope His Royal Highness will fire," said the young lieutenant-colonel. The Duke coldly declined.

Lord Winchelsea, who had hitherto remained silent, now interposed. "Perhaps His Royal Highness will not object to say that he considers Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox a man of honour and a gentleman."

"I shall say no such thing," replied the Duke, haughtily. "I can come here to give Colonel Lennox the satisfaction he demanded, and do not intend to return his fire. If he is not satisfied, he can have another shot."

The young officer declined this, as it was evident that the Duke would not fire. He felt greatly chagrined by so unsatisfactory a termination of the duel; but as his opponent was now led off the ground by his jovi-

second, he saw that there was nothing for him but to appear content. The surgeons, finding their services were not likely to be required, had also gone away ; so he permitted Lord Winchelsea to lead him to his postchaise.

It is impossible to convey an adequate idea of the excitement that prevailed throughout the metropolis, but more particularly at the West or Court end, when the duel became known.

I have already given some hints as to the cause of the unpopularity of the Lennox family, but other influences were at work against them of an equally powerful nature. It was not because they were staunch supporters of the minister so much as because they were devoted friends of the King.

George the Third had been suffering under the first severe attack of that dreadful malady to which he subsequently succumbed, and arrangements for a regency had, after a most violent parliamentary conflict between the Government and the Opposition, been effected ; the pretensions of the heir-apparent, his violent counsellors, and his imprudent proceedings ; having necessitated restrictions on his authority as Regent. The friends of the Prince of Wales were eager for his assumption of the royal authority, and the friends of the afflicted King were determined that his prerogative should not be set aside ; and so zealous were both, that it excited a fearful amount of personal animosity. It was represented by the popular party that the Prince was kept out of his rights by the intrigues of Pitt with the Queen, and it was fiercely retorted by the Court party that their beloved Sovereign was to be hurled from the throne for the advantage of Fox and his republican associates.

Under these circumstances, the Prince of Wales and his next brother, who supported him in all his proceedings, suddenly presented themselves at Windsor Castle, and insisted on seeing their father. The King's condition at this time demanded the utmost privacy, but not only did his elder sons persevere in thrusting themselves into his apartment, but, it is said, were overheard to express their opinion of his state, in terms that outraged the feelings of his Majesty's loyal attendants. The anger of the Queen was as great as the indignation of the household.

The report of the duel seemed to fan these sparks of discord into a fierce flame. The popular party, notwithstanding the revolutionary principles which many had professed, regarded the risk which the royal Duke had encountered as an act of sacrilege on the part of his opponent ; while the Court party were in transports of delight with the spirit shown by their young friend in defending his honour when unwarrantably attacked. But so high did popular feeling run against him, that when he appealed to his brother officers to state whether, in the affair that had just terminated, he had behaved as became an officer and a gentleman, they strove to screen their colonel-in-chief by deciding, after due deliberation, that *subsequently* to the interview in the orderly-room, the lieutenant-colonel had

behaved with courage; but, from the peculiar difficulty of his situation, not with judgment.

The young Guardsman, however, despite this rancorous hostility received what he considered to be a sufficient recompence. To the surprise—indeed, consternation of the more intemperate friends of the Regent the King was declared convalescent, and Queen Charlotte caused a state ball to be announced, as a pleasant celebration of that happy event. The lieutenant-colonel was honoured with an invitation that included a command to dance with Lady Charlotte Lennox.

On the evening of the state ball the palace looked more brilliant than ever it had appeared before. Whether this arose from unusual exertion on the part of the household to do honour to the occasion, or to the numerous and fashionable assemblage collected in the saloons, to dress and look as became loyal subjects rejoicing in a most felicitous event, so magnificent a spectacle as was then presented to the eye, the oldest courtier could not remember. The costume then worn at Court, though quaint, was not without a certain picturesque splendour,—the ladies' full robes and towering head-dresses being rivalled by the display made by the gentlemen's dress suits, which were then fashioned of such expensive materials that a tailor's bill of that time would astonish even the clients of Mr. Poole.

Such a display of the female full dress of the latest Paris fashion has not been seen for a long time. The more extravagant belles wore powdered wigs; others had the natural hair arranged in an enormous bush of curls that hung to the waist. The head was decorated with a gauze kerchief, a wreath of flowers, and a plume of feathers. The full *buffant*, as it was styled gave the bust a marked resemblance to the breast of a pouter pigeon.

The gentlemen wore pigtails generally, and sparrow-tailed coats, having extensive collars.

Colonel Lennox's entrance into the ball-room was an ovation. The most beautiful women pressed forward to get a nearer view of his person; and their gallants, to do them justice, seemed quite as ready to acknowledge him as the hero of the hour. When presented to Queen Charlotte, it has been stated that her Majesty honoured him with marked cordiality; but I believe that she was in high spirits from a load of fearful anxiety having been taken off her mind, and that she was equally demonstrative in the reception of all her guests who came recommended to her by their known fidelity to the King. The marked impression the young Guardsman produced was far more owing to the zeal of the lord chamberlain, and other influential officers of the household, than to the Queen's favour. Whether her Majesty knew of the duel is uncertain, but as no one had been hurt, there was no reason for her taking cognizance of it, and the loyalty of the Lennoxes had been placed beyond a question.

At last the colonel stood with his beautiful partner—radiant as much by the happy expression of her countenance as by the splendour of her jewels—

in the country-dance; and the band had commenced one of those saltatory tunes which so greatly delighted the beaux and belles of the last century. At the top of the room was the Prince of Wales with his partner, as the first couple; the next was the Duke of York and his partner; and the royal princes and princesses continued down the line, till all that fine family were disposed of in the same fashion.

The heir-apparent never looked to so little advantage. This was not from any deficiency in the dress of His Royal Highness, for his handsome figure had seldom appeared more graceful than it did that evening in his elegant costume. The disadvantage did not appear in his person, but in his features. Prepossessing as they were usually, they now assumed an expression very much the reverse. The look was sullen, almost fierce. His Royal Highness scarcely paid any attention to his partner, but he had lost nothing of the evidences of unusual consideration which had been shown to the young Guardsman. Whether his mind had been soured by the disappointment he had received from the regal authority having slipped out of his hands when the investment had been assured to him, or whether the Queen's marked indifference towards him had unfavourably affected his temper, it is certain that he was in a very bad humour.

His Royal Highness, however, maintained some restraint upon his feelings, and commenced the figure. The dance then went on with the usual animation, till the first couple had to join one that was next them when they were in a certain part of the line. The countenance of the Prince seemed to grow darker as he approached them. He stopped, and looked sternly at the gentleman.

"I will not sanction," he said, haughtily, "any affront offered to a member of my family." The Prince then swept his partner past them.

The gentleman started at so marked an insult; but a soft hand laid upon his arm, and an appealing look from the brightest eyes in the room, controlled him effectually.

"Dear Charles," whispered a voice in the tenderest accents.

With an effort the young lieutenant-colonel became calm.

Presently the other members of the royal family, and each in turn, followed the example of the Prince of Wales. They followed the example of their elder brother most probably because they had not the moral courage to oppose him. Be this as it may, the outrage was keenly felt by the young Guardsman. By his flushed face it was easy to see that the blood of the Lennoxes was up.

Lady Charlotte drew her partner out of the line of dancers, and began talking to him with that air of perfect satisfaction which a ball-room beauty readily adopts during her reign of supremacy. She was leading him away as if she had been dancing a long evening, and wished to retire. Nevertheless she felt the insult. The blood of the Gordons was up.

The intemperate conduct of the Prince of Wales had been observed by the Queen, whom, there is very little reason to doubt, it was intended to

annoy quite as much as the more apparent object of it. To have her guests publicly insulted under her own roof was a trial of her patience Her Majesty was in no humour to endure. There was a flash of anger in the royal countenance, as if the blood of the Mecklenburg-Strelitzes was up also.

Two or three stately dowagers were near the Queen, who had also been spectators of the incident just described. Conspicuous among them for her still eminently attractive person was the beautiful Duchess of Gordon. Her Grace had seen her daughter publicly insulted, and her indignation was evident. The blood of the Maxwells was up to fever heat.

Lady Charlotte led her partner towards this group, and as the Queen kindly held out her hand, she fell at her feet.

"Now, my love," said the Duchess, "do not agitate our beloved Queen."

The lovely girl kissed the Queen's hand, but Her Majesty raised her with an affectionate embrace.

The old ladies forbore from making any comment, but their looks, as much as the agitation of their lofty head-dresses, betrayed their excited feelings.

"Duchess," said Her Majesty, making a strong effort to conquer her resentment, "I will present your daughter and Colonel Lennox to the King."

The Duchess of Gordon made a profound curtsy; the Queen bowed her head to the little group; all the dowagers made a profound curtsy and the Queen, with quiet dignity, sailed out of the ball-room, having on each side of her the handsome colonel of the Coldstreams and his beautiful wife.

They passed without a word into the adjoining card-room, where the well-known figure of George the Third was readily discerned, dressed in a quiet suit, having no other decoration than a star, talking earnestly to a tall, slim young man of pleasing features, who was dressed almost as plainly. In the latter might be recognized "the angry boy" of the scurrilous author of "The Rolliad,"—the young statesman who had so boldly and successfully maintained the cause of his Sovereign in his recent affliction.

"Ah, Charlotte! Eh—what? Some friends of yours. Glad to see them. Lady Charlotte Lennox; yes. Very like her mother. The Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, of the Coldstream Guards, nephew of the Master of the Ordnance; I remember. Excellent plan of fortifications, wasn't it, Mr. Pitt? Hope, sir, you'll prove as distinguished a servant of the State, as the Duke, your uncle."

The King kissed the forehead of the young wife as he raised her from her kneeling position, and shook hands with her partner.

"We are going to Weymouth. Can't you come and see Charlotte and

myself there, eh, Colonel? Oh, going to Scotland to join the Duke of Gordon. Half a Gordon yourself, eh? Hardly that. Your better half, you know, must take the larger share, eh, Mr. Pitt?"

The minister joined in the King's hearty laugh, and the Queen, though she seemed equally to enjoy the joke, as if to check any further banter of her *protégés*, led them away to her own cabinet, as she said, to take some refreshment.

Many years later—I think it was in the year 1825—I joined a very large party assembled at one of the finest mansions in the county of Sussex. The distinguished assemblage had met to do honour to the brother of their Sovereign, who had condescended to accept the proverbial hospitality of the place. When I add that the host and hostess were the Duke and Duchess of Richmond, and that their residence was Goodwood House, I think I have said enough to suggest to the reader the magnificence of the entertainment that had been prepared for the royal guest.

He came, dressed in the well-known blue frock coat, slightly embroidered, and round hat. His Royal Highness was now an old man: He still, however, possessed a commanding figure and a gracious countenance. There could be no doubt that he was delighted with his reception, for he talked to every one with whom he had any acquaintance with even more than his characteristic affability, but distinguished the family at Goodwood with marks of consideration that seemed to spring from a long and ardent friendship.

The Duke of York had gratified his military ambition. He had led Continental armies, like the Austrian Archdukes—very much like some of them, was stated by some authorities. He had since fulfilled at home the onerous post of Commander-in-Chief of the British forces during a long and fierce war-struggle, and had been raised to the highest military dignity, that of Field-Marshal. His Royal Highness was now next in succession to the throne, and his elder brother, of whose regard for him I have in this paper given a characteristic demonstration, was quite as affectionately disposed as ever. His Majesty George the Fourth was known to be in a bad state of health, therefore the prospect of the Duke succeeding to the Crown at an early period, was clear to every eye. Fortunately for the Victorian era, it was ordered otherwise.

The Hon. Lieut.-Colonel Lennox had also satisfied his ambition. Almost immediately after succeeding to his uncle's title, as Duke of Richmond, he was appointed to the dignified post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and when tired of vice-regal magnificence, his Grace transferred himself to Brussels just in time to witness the grand close of the Napoleon drama at Waterloo. He was subsequently selected to hold the Governor-Generalship of North America, where his distinguished career was, by an accident, disastrously brought to a close in 1819. His eldest son—the first of fourteen that blessed the union of the young couple whom the Prince of

Wales had treated with such contumely at the state ball—had the honour of entertaining the royal Duke whose military career his father's pistol had so very nearly terminated in their memorable duel on Wimbledon Common.

Later in the day the lord of Goodwood was showing his illustrious guest the treasures of art in the mansion, in which His Royal Highness appeared to take unusual interest. They had passed through the corridor and the waiting-room, and had done justice to the works of the old and modern masters there displayed, when the Duke of York, while proceeding along the staircase hall, suddenly stopped before a portrait by Jackson labelled, "CHARLES, FOURTH DUKE OF RICHMOND." He gazed upon it in silence, and evidently not without emotion.

"Duke," he said, in a low voice, "that is very like your father."

"It is so considered, your Royal Highness," replied his much gratified host.

"His Grace was a brave officer, and a valuable servant of the State. His unhappy death caused me great distress."*

His son and successor bowed.

"I am inexpressibly gratified to hear your Royal Highness say so."

"I was a fool, Duke," exclaimed his guest, with vehemence, "for sharing in the prejudices against the family, caused by one member of it having changed his opinions, which, by the way, I have no doubt he did conscientiously; and I was very nearly obtaining a fit reward for my injustice. No one knows better than myself that the Lennoxes will fight, and fight well; and my friend, the Duke of Wellington, will readily endorse that opinion from his own knowledge. I put myself in the wrong, and used your father ill; and now, thirty-six years older, and I hope considerably wiser, I apologize to his representative."

The royal Duke held out his hand, and the Duke of Richmond grasped it in silence. Both were deeply affected, and it was some few minutes before the tour of inspection could be continued.

* The Duke of Richmond died from the bite of a rabid fox.

STRAWS IN THE STREAM.

NO. III.—THE GREAT STREAM THAT FLOWS THROUGH ST. STEPHEN'S.

THE new palace at Westminster, better known as the two Houses of Parliament, is a mighty reservoir as well as a deep and broad stream. It is a wondrous combination of the two, partaking in its attributes somewhat of the character of the fabled Nile, whose source was never known until this present year of grace, for it may be said periodically to overflow and become full for six months in the year, and then to be dried up—to evaporate, or at all events to resolve into its component elements for the remaining moiety of the earth's cycle. By the time this paper reaches the eye of the constant reader, the stately straws that are thick upon that wondrous stream will have been scattered over half the civilized world; for when, in the autumn time, her Most Gracious Majesty dismisses her faithful Commons to their several counties, they do not at once betake themselves to that destination, but fly away, like migratory birds, to distant lands and to attractive seas, seeking there, and obtaining mostly, those mundane pleasures which, through wealth alone, are to be obtained. There is no stream flowing through St. Stephen's hall at this time; its lights of all kinds have fled; its garlands are, if not dead, forgotten; and all—aye, even he, the janitor, that in the mighty stream-time guards the entrance to the channel—are departed. The spot is desolate; and where the stream was flowing fast and furious lately, with its waves raging and in tumult, ghostly echoes answer to any footfall that may have lost itself beneath those pinnacles, and the owner thereof hastens from those dreary corridors as though he had been scared even by the sound himself had made. How changed the scene in two short weeks! As far as the life-stream is concerned, that change is as marked and is very similar to that which has taken place during the lapse of untold ages in and about the Pyramids or in Memphis; and in both cases "decay's effacing fingers" have marked the spot where grandeur lingers; for St. Stephen's mighty hall and palace is crumbling away even in the spring-time of its youth—crumbling away, too, with such rapidity, that unless some means—which the grand old architects of old must have been acquainted with—be discovered for arresting the progress of the crumbling decay, the gorgeous palace will never reach a venerable age, but will sink into ruin, leaving indeed a splendid wreck behind.

I stood upon the banks of this great stream that flows beneath these gilded roofs, and I noted all the great straws that crowded over its surface. The straws that gather in this stream are representative straws indeed, for these living straws represent all sorts and conditions of men. The British House of Commons is held to be the concentrated essence of the wisdom of the empire. There is also the converse to the proposition, which is

equally true—the House of Commons contains the concentrated essence of all the stupidity of the nation. It would not be the real representative assembly it is, if it were not so. The British House of Commons is a social agglomeration of all kinds of intellect and of all kinds of passions. Bigotry finds plenty of advocates and followers there—not religious bigotry alone; I do not allude to that merely; but that bigotry also which teaches men that they are not as others are,—that which I may call the bigotry of caste, the bigotry of the blue-blood, which teaches men to think of class alone when dealing with interests that should be universal. It is not necessary to be a religious fanatic to become a bigot at all events in political and legislative matters. The two great houses of the legislature are full of bigots, social, religious, and political. Stand with me upon the banks of the great stream, and watch these straws as they are whirled about upon the agitated surface. A gale of political warfare is passing over it, and all the stream, and all the straws on it, are agitated greatly. But there are voices in that crowd that, when raised, can quell the stream to quietude. Notably is he, whose burly form is suggestive of that senator of a century ago, whose mantle the orator of to-day may be said to have received. He is ruling the tempest that agitates the stream; his voice is raging upon that fretted roof in words that strike into the very heart, for he is pleading in impassioned tones and animated gesture for a whole race. His words rise into sublimity, as we stand upon the bank of the great stream. We now can see, in the hush that is pervading all the scene, the homage that even bigotry can pay to intellect, when that intellect is sufficiently exalted to command it. Yes, as we listen, we can feel that the entire soul of the orator is welling up to his lips, and bursting out in burning words: The impassioned earnestness, the rolling volume of the mighty voice, the flashing of the kindling eye, the action emphasizing the appropriate word,—all speaking of the conviction that is unswerving in the mind of this one of the noblest of all the Romans.

We can look across the stream, and see another intellect that might have been commanding, if it had shared the attributes which characterize the one we have just passed. In the one case we have intellect and all sincerity; in the other, intellect without principle. The one is a forensic politician, his politics being those of place; the other is the politician of real opinion.

Cross again the stream, and we have intellects again of noble order. The brilliant orator, whose depth of learning is equalled by his skill and power of exposition,—a master indeed of subtle argument, the powerful reasoner, whose reasons are the more trenchant, seeing that they are based upon conviction far different from him we have just passed by; the one is an exponent, the other is an advocate. The one speaks out for what he believes to be right against the wrong, the judicious against the impolitic; the other lashes himself into a seeming oratorical phrensy for that which he knows to be untenable, defective, and untrue.

These are some of the great straws that float upon this great stream, and are most conspicuous in it. The other straws are typical of those in the great world-stream of society out of doors. Every class of mind and intellect is typified there. This legislative stream has remarkable properties. It has the power of changing the character of a man in about twenty minutes, changing it for that space of time as effectually as if they had been newly born. Look down upon the legislative life-stream as it flows past you, and you shall see a crowd of staid, serious, thoughtful, elderly men—men of standing in the City—men of solemn importance when they are at home, and of austere dignity when they are abroad—men who, if you were to meet them in their bank parlour, or their counting-house, or at any other place of business in the City, you would no more dream of attempting any facetiæ or pleasantry with, than you would think of asking them to lend you a sovereign—never having seen them before. The legislative life-stream has the power of changing these men into frantic gesticulators. I have seen it do so often. I have seen long rows of these staid legislators seized with paroxysms that are only to be paralleled on the road to Epsom in the evening of the Derby day. You see that gentleman with the rotund stomach, over which is an expansive nankeen waistcoat, and who wears an extensive dress-coat—for he is too staid a man to yield to the fashion of the day—and so he sticks to the dress-coat, the tight black trowsers, and the white neckcloth of his youth. He is a banker in the City, and he has a perpetual frown on his countenance—an austere expression generated years ago, when he first commenced business. He represents a city in which the church is rampant and lawn paramount, where everything is grave and orthodox, respectable and mean—where Godlike charity begins at home indeed, and stays at home—where humility is preached, and ostentation practised—where a church dignitary revels in the sackcloth and ashes of ten thousand a year, and where the loaves and the fishes are the heraldic bearings of a purified church. Surely such a legislator as this is one to claim our deference, and to subdue us into awe. Well, so he is at four o'clock in the afternoon, when he goes from his bank parlour to "the House;" but he is periodically changed by the great stream. That periodical change takes place on the occasion of the settlement of great questions—when a great division is to be taken, and when an obnoxious member will persist in standing between this gentleman and his fellows in the House, who desire to record their ayes and noes. On such occasions you would scarcely recognize him, as, with apoplectic face, he is shouting incoherent words, and emitting strange sounds, that take the form of "vi-vi-vi-vide," "vooh," "vooh," and you would almost shrink back with horror if you were to see him as he puts his hands up to his mouth, and, using them as he would a speaking-trumpet, he shrieks, "Yaboo!" and then whistles through his thumbs. Nor would you credit his imitative powers, unless you had auricular demonstration of the fact. If you were introduced to him in his bank parlour, and informed

that that very evening, at twelve o'clock, he would endeavour, in a fit way, to convert himself into a cock, as he is crowing at the break of day, you would consider yourself affronted by your informant, and very naturally ask what he took you for. And yet that information would be entirely veritable. I have seen this staid member of the legislature so pump the face, in his thrilling endeavour to imitate the cock, that I have trembled for his blood-vessels,—and not only he, but dozens around. Dozens!—hundreds, for the incongruous chorus that is performed at a time could only proceed from nothing less than creatures of the air. The chorus is one of the chief labours of the session, and it will rarely be understood, therefore, why parliamentary labours are prostrating. No one can adequately understand what they are, save those who have to go through them. I am quite convinced that constituencies generally have no conception of them. Does any single member of the constituency of the honourable gentleman, to whom I have just alluded, believe that, although he could not very well sustain the character of St. Peter, he could, nevertheless, most adequately represent the warning St. Peter received? What would they say or do if, at a county meeting held in the staunch borough which he represents, this usually solitary gentleman were to get up, and, giving the preliminary flap with his wings to imitate the wings, should utter a long, loud, shrill crow, which should echo like a reality through the county hall? Why, they would stare at him with astonishment, and then send for Forbes Winslow.

More than two hundred years ago there was a great storm in the popular branch of the legislature, but it was roughly quelled by the stalwart march of a stalwart warrior politician, who, advancing to the broad table that stretches before the Speaker's throne, exclaimed, in tones that were unmistakeable, "Take away that bauble!" and it was taken away, and has never been seen or heard of since. But when the Monarch was called back to the throne of his ancestors, the old bauble was replaced by a new one, and that new one lies upon the table to this day; but, as though in commemoration of that startling scene to which I have just referred, a ceremony that is somewhat analogous to it is going on through, by which the legislative elements of the great stream at Stephen's are scattered to the sunshine. As we stand upon the bank watching these legislative straws in the stream, a voice cries out,—

"Black Rod."

And the stream becomes hushed, as an individual, attired in the most solemn black, and wearing a black sword, and carrying a black baton, looking altogether as black, and not altogether unlike a gigantic ant with its hind legs, stalks up to the table. This figure, when he arrives at the table, makes a profound obeisance to "the bauble," and in solemn tones addresses the Speaker in these words:—

"Mr. Speaker,—The Lords, who by virtue of her Majesty's commission are authorized to prorogue this present parliament, and to give

royal assent to certain bills agreed upon by both Houses, desire the presence of this honourable House in the House of Peers, to hear the commission read."

And then the black apparition, who looks so much like a gigantic ant on its hind legs, walks backwards down the House, bowing profoundly until he reaches the entrance, and then Mr. Speaker gathers up his robes. The Sergeant-at-Arms, who looks for all the world like another ant out of the same nest as "Black Rod," takes up "the bauble" from the table, shoulders it, and then marshals the way "this honourable House" should go to the House of Peers, and thus the stream flows out, and carries us on to the upper waters.

The straws that float in the stream of those upper waters are certainly not so heterogeneous as those which characterise the more extensive stream. They are of a class—one exclusive, radiant, unassailable, and prescriptive class. They represent none but themselves, although they share the passions, the weaknesses, the bigotry, and it may be the crimes that are the seething soun that rises to the surface of the human mind.

The two great streams are blended now even as they are about to separate, and we can look down, from the secluded elevation upon which obscurity has placed us, upon the stream that forms these upper waters, into which the other life-stream has blended, and we can observe the gilded straw that floats upon it.

There are princes here. Foremost amongst them in all that august assembly is he who is the eldest son of the Crown, and who just now may be said in nearly all matters of State ceremonial to represent the Crown itself. But high as is his position in this great assembly, and in the land, there is no distinctive outward show to mark the great distinction which doth hedge a prince. He is, however, distinguished in appearance, for he is tall and young, and there is but one other tall and young member of that great assembly present, and he is not a prince. The members of this august assembly are mostly those who have travelled far upon the road of life,—a road that to them generally has not been flinty, and upon which they never faint from over toil, or sink beneath the weight of common woes. We have here the representatives of every descent; and as we look around upon the countenances and forms that are ranged upon these crimson benches, Pope's couplet anent the blood of all the Howards is irresistibly suggested to our mind. He who is sitting just below us, and who wears a coronet that by-and-by, perchance, will bloom beneath the strawberry leaves, has vast hereditary wealth and blooming ancestral honours thick upon him, but they adorn and make puissant the leaden image of a titled greatness. And of course we have the pride of birth and ancestry in all its blooming glory here. Here are the fountains of that blue blood, of which some far-seeing individuals believe that they can discern even the faintest glimpse; and we have the pride that never stoops to degradation of alliance, even though affection prompt, and virtue and true

worth light on the way. Here is one but just beneath us now, who has been blessed with many children, to whom he is, and ever will be, much attached; and yet not one of these can inherit his great name. In the heyday of his youth his pride was paramount, and the blue blood swelled his heart, but he was prompted to steal away a trusting girl,—young and beautiful, and gently born. She trusted him with all her girlish heart and soul, but the pride of his exalted rank whispered to him that it would be a stain upon his escutcheon to trust her with his name, although she had trusted him with the richest gift that God had endowed her with. She is gone from him now, but her children are left to him, and he cares for them tenderly. In his prime he regrets the false pride of his youth, which has denied to him the solace of descendants who shall bear his name. His coronet floats proudly on the stream, but it is simply a straw.

And we have commanding eloquence too, and great ability and genius sometimes even in those of long descent. We see before us one whose line goes back in centuries, leading through Marston Moor and Bosworth Field, and Agincourt and Cressy, to the early days of English history. But we cannot have perfection even in a peer. We have here the eloquence that is commanding; the dash and sparkle of brilliant wit; but they do not make the patriotic statesman with a judgment that is far-seeing. Suppose this high, puissant peer, with his six centuries of descent, had been an autocrat in his youth, and in his autocracy had acted upon the opinions which he has enunciated, happily only as one straw in the great stream. In that case we should never have enjoyed the advantage of that great invention which enables us with lightning speed to move above, about, and upon the universal stream. He, as a great legislator, with pertinacity opposed the progress of that mighty agent, and held it to be the idle dream of those who had a faith in the impracticable. He would have denied us intercourse with all the world, and hence is he a striking instance of how brilliant eloquence may be unaccompanied by any spark of practical wisdom.

But we have venerable and venerated worth and ability here below us now, for I can see before me some of those whose names were great when this century was young, and who have filled a wide-spread space in contemporary history from that time down to recent years,—men who lifted up their voices for mankind when this great stream that we are contemplating was raging furiously beneath the breath of ill-favouring winds which happily have passed away, and to return no more. I see before me too, some old warriors who marched to bloody fields when our grandfathers were in their prime. Time seems to have left them like memorials of an age that is receding rapidly into the dim past, whose records are a portion of the education of our youth.

The stream is ebbing. The mandate that comes from royalty has issued forth, the gilded halls are empty now, and, as I turn to leave this spot, my footfall echoes on the spangled roof.

C. J. C.

NOTES FROM JEDDO.

AFTER waiting five weeks at that most unpleasant of all unpleasant places, Hong Kong, I at last received orders to embark on board H.M.S. *Sampson*, for Nagasaki. "Now, at last," thought I, "a few weeks will see me quietly settled." Unfortunately, want of coals obliged us to put into Shanghai, where we were detained a whole week. At last we started once more, and after missing our way in the thick mists which seem to prevail on these coasts during this season, we ran into the Bay of Nagasaki on the fifth of our departure from China. Enclosed at the entrance by high rocks, which from even a couple of miles distance seem to offer no opening, one would suppose that Nature had done her part in aiding the Japanese to keep themselves secluded from the rest of the world. As soon as the mouth of the bay is entered, one may observe, if he look sharply among the trees, several forts on both sides, situated so as to be almost unnoticed. I do not pretend to be much of a tactician, but I should imagine that if the Japanese really wished to oppose a hostile force, they have every facility for so doing.* At several points on the road up, a couple of sunken junks would be a sufficient barrier to the passage of large ships; while, if a landing were effected with the view of marching troops up by land, a long line of small forts, mostly mounted with long brass 32-pounders, would have to be separately attacked and silenced. Perhaps it would have been well for the future happiness of these poor people had they persisted in their refusal to open their ports to foreigners. They have nothing to gain, and a great deal to lose, by the change in their policy. All they required they had within themselves; nowhere do you see a careworn or misery-stricken face, nowhere a cripple, not even in this large city of Jeddo. It will now be our part to teach them wants they never knew, to make them discontented with their present way of life, to shame them out of their innocence, and to introduce religious hatred and dissensions among them; then our mission, I suppose, will be thought to be fulfilled. When I see how happy the people are here, and how small their wants, I cannot help thinking with a shudder of what a few years may produce.

We had not proceeded far up the bay (of Nagasaki) before a boat with Japanese officials came towards us, waving us back. No notice, however, was taken of this, and on we advanced, at half steam, the men on the paddle-boxes carefully feeling the way with the lead-line. It seems that the blue ensign we carried was unknown to the Japanese, for Admiral Stirling carried the white, and thus they regarded us as some strange ship, not belonging to one of the powers that had concluded a treaty with their

* These forts are all well provided with artillery always ready for action, and are by no means mere sham, like most of the Chinese forts.

country. When we came to anchor, at about a mile from Decima, we found a Russian frigate, a Dutch man-of-war, and some one or two Dutch merchantmen there before us. It did not last long before some boats pulled off from shore; one containing some Europeans boarded us to ask if we had brought letters, and the first man who came on deck was an old acquaintance of mine from A——. He immediately invited me to come ashore, and take up my lodgings with him till the *Sampson* left.

Some months before my arrival the greater part of Decima had been burned down. In Holland every one has, of course, heard of Decima,* and formed to himself a certain idea of it,—as an island in the Bay of Nagasaki, joined to the town by a porcelain bridge of a hundred arches. Some such idea of it, at least, had long been floating in my mind; judge of my surprise, then, on landing at Decima, not to be able to observe at first sight that it was an island at all. It was only when I walked round it that I observed it. The ditch which separates it is so narrow that one could almost leap it with a pole. The bridge is one that can be crossed at two steps, and the only porcelain I saw about it was the remains of an old broken basin that had been thrown away. Life in Decima has, no doubt, many charms for a young man. Every one has his *moesme*† living with him, who keeps his house for him, looks after his linen, &c. Then, again, the gate that separates Decima from Nagasaki is open night and day, and there is no restriction whatever upon a person's going about town whenever and however he pleases. The day after my arrival there was a national feast—the celebration throughout the empire of all the birthdays of all the male children born in the course of the last year. Every house that had been blessed with an increase in the family during that period was ornamented with flags and streamers, to which were suspended all kinds of fantastic ornaments—bells, paper windmills, apes dressed in caps and bells, &c. We entered one or two of these houses, and were invited into the *sanctum sanctorum*; fruits, cakes, sweetmeats, and tea were offered us. Nothing seems to give these people greater pleasure than when they can show their friendly feelings towards you. In return, try to speak a word of Japanese, and tell them the English or Dutch name for any object, and they are perfectly delighted.

Two days after our arrival we were officially received by the governor at his house, and invited to partake of a collation. We were all in full uniform, and, having rather a long walk in the broiling sun from the landing-

* The island of Decima is not much larger than Trafalgar Square. During two hundred years it was the only locality in Japan in which the Dutch traders were allowed to settle, and that on restrictions of a very undignified character.

† These *moesmes* are not mere "unfortunates," but are generally the daughters of poor but respectable parents; they are appointed to their calling by the Japanese municipal authorities, nor does any dishonour attach to them from it; on the contrary, it is often an introduction for them to marriage.

lace to the palace, severely felt the weight of our embroidered cloth coats, though the people were, no doubt, highly edified by the sight,—at least, they seemed highly amused at our dress being so different from their own. Our entertainment was in true Japanese style, even to the chopsticks; though, for those who preferred it, a spoon and fork were given with each tray. As this was an excellent opportunity for testing the value of the *Japanese cuisine*, I tasted of every dish—sharks' fins, edible birds' nests, and a long list of messes, one of which I strongly suspect to have been earthworms. Fish there was, too, of every possible description, and cooked in every possible way. Our entertainment lasted about two hours, and, on our return, his Excellency was kind enough to send each one his *weekmeats* and pastry, neatly done up in separate parcels, and tied with red and white cords.*

It was intended, before leaving, to establish the consulate here, as several English merchants had already commenced business here, and it was highly necessary to look after their interests, and keep others within proper bounds, for the credit of our own name. A proper dwelling had, however, first to be sought, and when this was found, carpenters were to be set to work to make the necessary changes. At the end of three weeks the British flag was hoisted at the temporary residence—a temple; and a few days after, we hove anchor, and steamed out for Jeddo.

A run of five days brought us to the place of our destination, though, fortunately, the thick mists prevented us from seeing anything of the straits while running up. The Bay of Jeddo is some miles broad, but around there runs a shelving flat, which prevents ships of any burden from approaching closer than three or four miles from the landing-place. On the first day passed, and no one seemed to take any notice of our arrival; on the second was drawing to a close in the same manner, when it was supposed that, as the next day was the anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne, we should fire a royal salute, which would soon bring the authorities from the shore to see what was the matter. Our guns (very 84-pounders) were cleared and run out ready for next day, when a large boat of government officials was seen approaching. This boat contained the Governor for Foreign Affairs, equal to our Under Secretary of State, accompanied by the usual complement of spies. Hearing of our intention, they requested us not to fire any salute without giving them at least two days' notice, that the people might not be alarmed. As a matter of politeness the captain gave way, and we only dressed ship next day. I cannot now venture on a description of Jeddo, but you have doubtless heard all about it from other quarters. I am now living with the American Minister Plenipotentiary, alone, in a wilderness of a temple. The only

* In Japan, etiquette prescribes that the residue of the dessert be fairly divided, and a portion be sent to each guest. The omission of this rule would be a marked breach of manners.

drawback to my comfort, however, is that when any official under the rank of minister calls, I must put on a cloth uniform, for his Excellency will hold personal interview with none but those equal to him in rank—a necessary rule in this country.

I have not yet had sufficient time or opportunity for investigating Japanese matters very deeply, for though I found several officials in Nagasaki tolerably well up in conversational Dutch, yet I was unable to advance very far in my researches. They are a fearfully suspicious race of beings, especially in their dealings with foreigners, and no official is allowed to hold any intercourse with the Dutch settlers in Decima, or the natives of any other foreign nation, unless accompanied by a *devarskijker* or spy. It is the duty of this spy to report to his superior whatever conversation may have occurred between the conversing parties, as well as every transaction that may have taken place during that conversation. I succeeded, however, in establishing a kind of familiarity with one of the interpreters, who would, I think, have been more communicative than he was had it not been for the attendant spy, who, it seems, was very deficient in his Dutch, and was not able to note down with precision all the remarks that we made to each other. From what I could gather it appears that the lower classes of the Japanese are well educated—especially in the matter of obedience to constituted authority—in free schools established by the government, and that the blind, deaf, and dumb are tenderly provided for in institutions entirely supported by the public exchequer. Polygamy is legal, but seldom practised; and the women, on the whole, are remarkably modest and moral. Japanese marriages, however, are seldom mixed up with love, and are invariably effected by intermediary parties—professional hymeneal brokers. I could not make out whether there is any civil service commission appointed to examine candidates for government offices, but I discovered that those offices are invariably hereditary, and that if an official has no son to succeed him, he can adopt, for that purpose, the son of a friend. The official who gave me this information had himself five sons, all of whom had slipped into office in consequence of their having been lucky enough to secure the patronage of deceased or retired officials, and he had to hunt up another youth to succeed himself. Justice seems to be equitably administered among the Japanese, who have their regular fixed courts of justice and judges; though the institution of council is unknown.* Flogging, imprisonment, tattooing, and the wearing of heavy iron rings on the arms, are the punishments decreed for minor offences. Criminals condemned, for murder, smuggling, or arson, to capital punishment, are beheaded, though not in such a refined way as in France. The death-warrant must in all cases be signed by the Emperor and by the culprit himself. I naturally made some inquiries

* But the accused can call upon any of his friends to plead for him, or to state his case for him; or he can defend himself.

respecting the institution of the "happy despatch," and found that, though it is seldom practised, it is occasionally called into operation by first-class officials who have been detected in some serious dereliction of duty. Whenever it is resorted to, however, it is with a view of saving the honour of the family—all of whom would partake of the ignominy incurred did not the disgraced official avail himself of this singular means of wiping out the stain of his dishonour. In most cases the offender applies to the Emperor for permission to rip himself open, which is invariably refused. By that process he becomes whitewashed, and is allowed, generally, to retain his office and his honour. The art of medicine is evidently little known among the Japanese practitioners, and the surgical instrument most in use is simply a needle—or rather a set of needles—which the surgeons use very dexterously for all kinds of ills that *flesh* is heir to. It will be no news for me to tell you that the Japanese entertain very strong prejudices against Christianity; anything in the form of a cross, the badge of the Portuguese and Spanish settlers who, in the sixteenth century, sought to betray their country into the hands of Portugal and Spain, is regarded with a species of horror. It is, however, a hatred of Christianity, not of Christians, that prevails among the Japanese; and let us hope that no attempt will be made by well-meaning but injudicious zealots in England to thrust Christianity upon them. God only knows what would happen to the missionaries charged with such a mission; something, perhaps, that even Armstrong cannon would be ineffectual to punish. The Japanese have not, like the New Zealanders, a weakness for cold clergymen; but they would not scruple to make mincemeat of a proselytizing busybody.

How taxes are levied, how they are collected, and who pay them, are at present *arcana* which I have not been able to fathom. It certainly seems to me that every man at least is a government official, and the pay of the civil service must be a source of great concern to the Japanese Chancellor of the Exchequer. Political representation or political partisanship of course does not exist in a country where politics are a myth. The Mitrada is the sole source of honour and authority; but they have to pass through a fearfully thick wall of jealousy and intrigue before they become tangible realities. He is rarely permitted to leave his palace, and when he does he is borne in a closely-curtained palanquin, so that the gaze of the multitude may not come between the wind and his nobility. He is never occupied in the public business of the state, except in occasionally writing his name on some document which he is not allowed to weary himself by reading or hearing read. He must suffer fearfully from *ennui* if half of what I have heard of his manner of life be true. The nobles are, I imagine, a very wealthy class; extremely exclusive, and altogether opposed to the new policy of opening the Japanese ports to foreigners; but with this exception I should think there are but few wealthy people in Japan, for the simple reason that every source of

wealth seems to have been monopolized by themselves. The people are very much influenced by the priests, and the priests by the nobles, who, I have reason to believe, are using them as the instrument of rendering the new commercial policy of the country unpopular; and if so, success seems to be crowning their endeavours.

As to trade, I am afraid after all there will be very little doing with these people. All they manufacture they want themselves, and they manufacture nothing that would have any marketable value in Europe or America. They have little to export besides wax and silk, and they are dreadfully suspicious of being cheated in their bargains. Metals, especially copper, they have in abundance; but their exportation in any form whatever is strictly prohibited, and the Japanese police are ubiquitous, while death is the punishment for smuggling. Tea they have, but it is far inferior to China tea, and much dearer. All imported goods must be paid for in kind—with those numerous inlaid work-tables and chimney-piece ornaments, those tea-trays and slippers known in Europe as Japan ware. For many years past the Trading Company of the Netherlands have annually sent out, by permission of the Japanese Government, a cargo of European knickknacks, which are exchanged for a cargo of Japanese ditto. The latter are annually sold in Amsterdam at an average loss to the Company of twenty per cent. on the cost price; but as they clear forty per cent. on the cargo here, they still make a very fair profit out of the transaction. Cate a weasel asleep, or a Dutchman either! Since I have been here I have often racked my brain to discover some means by which this opening of the ports of Japan to foreign nations can be made commercially advantageous to them; but I am inclined to think far more money will be spent in the support of diplomatic missions and consular establishments than will ever be squeezed, even by the high-pressure machinery of free trade, out of our mercantile transactions with this isolated and isolation-loving people.

C. H. GUNN.

MADELEINE GRAHAM

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WHITEFRIARS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX.

GLENGARIFF CASTLE.

"MISS GRAHAM!—and I was on my way to Killarney, to see if there were any letters from—from the young lady who resides as governess in your father's family, Miss Graham! Of course—most certainly!—my mother will be delighted to receive any person who—to be of any imaginable service to——Pray accept my arm—my fin, I think I may call it on the occasion—to the place, for I shall need drying myself certainly before I can go on to Killarney, or else they will think I have been on a visit to my ancestor at the bottom of the lake!"

Such was Lord Glengariff's rather confused reply to the young lady's very natural request for hospitality—himself too much pleased and excited with the vision of a person who, in whatever remote degree, was connected with the object of his attachment, to consider the abruptness and pre-determination he might otherwise have noticed in it. Nay, a transporting thought occurred to him, on recognizing Madeleine, that Emily had arrived in Killarney under her friendly, her all but sisterly, convoy and accompaniment. And so, during a good portion of the speech above recorded, he was anxiously searching among the now nearing flotilla, for the beloved face and form. But nowhere recognizing either, his lordship concluded by offering the indicated assistance, after running the water, as well as he could, off the drenched sleeve of his summer paletot.

"Uncle and Aunt Bucktrout are with me—may they come too? The rest are going up to the cascade on the Toomies for a picnic, and they can go on. They intend to lunch on broiled salmon, cooked on arbutus skewers, in the open air; it is said to give such a fine relish to the fish—and they will not care for my absence. If I had been drowned, I dare say the champagne would have tasted just as good to most of them; but uncle and aunt are very fond of me, and have brought me on an excursion with them to the lakes; and I did so want to bring dear Emily with me too, but she would not come. She seems to have taken quite a hatred to Kerry ever since she was ordered to leave it by your mamma, Lord Glengariff! She is such a proud girl; though no one would think her so, much, to look at her; and she told me a thousand times, when I offered to bring her, that if you and all your family, and the great Ghost O'Donoghue himself, were to come crawling to her like worms all the way from Killarney to Belfast, to beg her to come back here, she never would, until she had trampled upon all your prides and insolence into the very dust!"

"Did Emily say so?—Emily *Maughan*?" inquired the young lord with something of the incredulous iteration of Garrick, when the aspirant to theatrical glories informed him he wished to make his *début* in Hamlet. "What! Hamlet the *Dane*?"

"That was her answer. But I suppose your lordship don't conceive yourself much about the airs a governess may give herself? I should think you could easily enough get another governess for your little sister."

"But she did not say she would *never* return to Glengariff? When she had properly let people see she had a spirit of her own, and could resent the way she was treated—as she had a perfect right," exclaimed Lord Glengariff.

"Oh no; Emily did *not* say she would *never* return to Glengariff, and I think if she were let alone a little bit in her obstinacy, she would come round much sooner! That is the way I should do if I were Lord Glengariff. Some people only get haughtier and more insolent the kinder and more considerately they are behaved to by other people. A beggar on horseback is bad enough; but when you hold him the stirrup to mount it is no wonder if he gives you a kick!—Dear aunt, there is no occasion for a scene! I am not a bit the worse, I think, except that I am wet through, skin and all, and Lord Glengariff (this gentleman is Lord Glengariff) has most kindly offered to let me go up to the castle, and dry myself at the housekeeper's fire, after, I am sure, saving my life; for none of you would have been of the slightest service."

"Don't say that of me, Miss Graham," exclaimed Mr. Fauntleroy, who had now arrived; "I, at all events, intended to die with you; but though I cannot swim, I was stripping off my coat to plunge in after you to the bottom, when—"

"When my Lord Glengariff, who can swim—which rather diminishes his merit, of course;—plunged in with his coat on, and saved me! Well, all you go on to the cascade and the picnic, and if I possibly can I will join you very soon. At present I do feel very cold—all of a shiver! Undoubtedly do you think I shall have a fever?"

Dr. Bucktrout looked at his niece, as much as to say that it entirely depended on her own will and pleasure; but only ejaculated, "I hope no dear!" and felt her pulse.

"Hang the picnic! Let me help take you up to the castle, Miss Graham," said Mr. Fauntleroy, for whom the walls of a castle, or any other place of stately abode, always had a magnetic power. What inconveniences of lodging—what scorns of high-born hostesses—what fatigue of mind to achieve the witty and the amusing (and Mr. Vivian Fauntleroy was always expected to be funny, wherever he was invited) had the poor man undergone in his time, to be able to say at the *Dolce-Far-Niente* Club afterwards, "I was at the Earl of A.'s, or the Duke of X.'s, the other day, and we did so enjoy ourselves! The selectest thing imaginable—hardly anybody else invited!"

"Thank you; but Miss Sparrowgrass would miss her beau, and I should not like to seem so very selfish and inconsiderate, as I suppose it would not be easy to get another in the place to-day; and, besides, my brave rescuer's support is that to be most depended upon, I am sure," said Madeleine, turning disdainfully away to the young Earl from Mr. Fauntleroy, who for the last few days had been endeavouring to pique her into attention to himself by affecting to transfer his admiration and homage to the eldest Miss Sparrowgrass—The *Miss, par excellence*, as he called her, with satirical emphasis, sometimes, to any of the younger sisters, when out of hearing of their senior, to give them a notion that he thought *her* too old, but not them, in case he should think it amusing to flirt downwards among the sisters. And this indeed was a common trick with him, by which he prolonged his own diversion in families, and had the fun not unfrequently to set the female members together by the ears in a style that contributed in various ways to the gratification of his vanity and lively sense of the ridiculous.

Luckily, Miss Sparrowgrass did not overhear the sarcasm, though she now arrived at the head of the Sparrowgrass family, in an apparent agony of affectionate anxiety and condolence. "Oh, my dear Miss Graham, I am so glad to see you safe! I thought for certain you were drowned,—and it made me so wretched; I quite screamed;—you must have heard me as you were going down.—I couldn't help it, I was so frightened, though it did no good, of course. And poor Sparrowgrass! You would have thought he was in love with you instead of Lady Clara Fitzhaughton—which he is, and mamma quite approves of it, you know;—he turned so white, and told me he felt quite sea-sick, and made such a clutch at Dr. Bucktrout's brandy flask the moment he heard you were safe! And your beautiful muslin spoilt, too, that everybody said you looked so charming in, in the morning;—what a mercy, still, it was not your pretty magenta silk, with the tremendous lot of little flounces—I almost think they would have sunk you—you wore the other day at the regatta on the Upper Lake."

Such were the congratulations Miss Graham received after her rescue from death by drowning. And they were sincere and well meant in the way of the world, where none of us is perhaps of so very great importance when we drop out of it as some of us would fain believe ourselves while we are in it. Though I don't say exactly, either, that the picnic would have gone on if Miss Graham had been actually submerged so long as to cause the species of asphyxia which learned men have discovered to be produced by suffocation in the water. That would have been too strong even for a group of Killarney tourists, sinking an hotel companion in that way;—and the champagne would have had to be drunk quietly and mournfully in the boats returning with the body; and the glittering salmon in the baskets would have had to be cooked at home in the hotel kitchen instead of over a gipsy fire on a mountain side. Society has a decent regard for its members, and exhibits it on all very marked occasions of the kind in a

manner that does the highest credit to its good feeling and sense of propriety.

On the whole, Madeleine, leaning on the arm of her stately young rescuer, and followed dutifully by uncle and aunt up a cleft in the hills fashioned into a good though rather steep road to the castle above, has the additional consolation of thinking that she left the general company much annoyed at her absence. More especially as, in spite of some broad hints, Lord Glengariff extended no invitation to any one else but seemed in reality lost in a gloomy abstraction until Madeleine, renewing her shiver, begged him to lead on at once to the mansion, as she felt most uncomfortably chilled and depressed. Dripping then like naiad and merman, the twain paired up on the path to Glengariff Castle and very soon arrived on the terrace before it.

Fortune still continued favourable to Madeleine at this juncture. She could scarcely have wished herself better luck than befell her in the fact that precisely when she reached this elevation, Mr. Behringbright, having luncheon with Lady Glengariff, was doing himself the honour of escorting her ladyship on the very brief promenade she usually took on this terrace once a day listening with wary attention to her alarmed conjectures on the causes of Emily Maughan's prolonged silence, without daring to allude to his own conclusions on the subject. But the dialogue had sent back his thoughts to Belfast, and revived with such distinctness and play of allurement and beauty the image of Sir Orange Graham's daughter, that he had come to the resolution, or the weakness, of crossing to Killarney, to ascertain whether the enchantress had arrived there, as soon as Lady Glengariff favoured him with a dismissal. And now what strange and mingled welcome and unwelcome vision arose before his actual gaze, in the person of this youthful pair of streaming water-divinities emerging on the castle terrace from a private gateway, so abruptly from the deep glen below, that it almost seemed as if they must have floated up direct from the lake into which the torrent of the O'Sullivan Falls discharged itself by that course. Certainly Lord Glengariff was a fitting representative of the great O'Donoghue of the Lakes at this moment. But could it really be Miss Madeleine Graham, leaning thus familiarly on his arm, and with her light muslin garments hanging in as graceful welts around her faultless figure as ever sculptor fashioned on his decent water-nymph?

Mr. Behringbright could hardly believe his eyes! But, in truth, people ought to distrust those organs of information much oftener than the common saying would authorize; for what a beam of joyful recognition suddenly lighted up in Madeleine Graham's eyes when, in her turn, she seemed to recognize an unexpected and most wished-for apparition in him.

"You here, Mr. Brownjohn? Oh, I feared—I thought, I mean—you must long since have left Killarney,—never seeing or hearing anything about you, after you had so kindly promised!" she exclaimed, darting her glance upon him, and pleased to see how he paled and quivered at the stroke.

"Mr. Brownjohn!" exclaimed Lord Glengariff; and he was hastening to correct the mistake, if the subject of it had not prevented him.

"Miss Graham knows me—in Belfast—as Miss *Maughan's cousin*, my lord; as I did myself the honour to introduce myself in Sir Orange Graham's family,—Miss Graham knows me as Mr. *Brownjohn*, and it is unnecessary to repeat the introduction!"

"Yes, Mr. Brownjohn—neither mamma nor I can ever forget how kind you were to us in crossing the Channel; though being dear Emily's cousin gave you so much stronger a claim upon any return we could make, when we found that you were so. But, oh, I owe more than ever I can possibly dream of repaying to your noble patron here, Lord Glengariff, who has rescued me, at the risk of his own life, from a watery grave!"

"Nonsense! Miss Graham, pray don't mention it. I never ran the least risk of my life; I can swim like a fish!" said Lord Glengariff, blushing at the warmth of this eulogium, but considerably perplexed and annoyed by what he now understood of the pretended relationship and assumed name of Mr. Behringbright with Emily Maughan. "The truth is, mamma," he added, playfully, in explanation to his mother, who looked much surprised, "this young lady fell accidentally out of a pleasure boat just as I was crossing to Killarney in ours, and I picked her out of the water, and have brought her up to the house to dry her clothes, and prevent her taking cold on her return with her party."

"Every attention shall be paid . . . Miss Graham, I think you say, Ferdinand?" observed Lady Glengariff, with singular coldness and austerity of manner, even considering her usually haughty and reserved demeanour to strangers. "Mrs. Macnab will see to it.—Nora, procure Miss Graham a change of clothes from my wardrobe, and—"

"Oh no, your ladyship, I am not tall enough, and I do feel so ill and chilly. If I might just go to a bed for a few hours, while my own clothes dry!" ejaculated Madeleine, shivering now excessively.

"Good heavens! Miss Graham seems very ill! Lady Glengariff, for goodness' sake, let an apartment be prepared for her at once!" said Mr. Behringbright, rallying from his surprise into another emotion of compassion and alarm. "Dr. Bucktrout, don't you think it much the best?"

"Much the best!" echoed that gentleman, who thought he perceived an intimation to that effect in his principal's eyes.

It was so decided. Nora Macnab, summoned from the dining-room, where she sat seemingly quietly at work knitting woollen stockings for her half-dozen sons, but keeping her eyes on her unfortunate mistress in her promenade, undertook to convey the young lady to a proper chamber. And thither she was about to retire, attended only by her aunt, Lord Glengariff evidently considering he had accomplished all that could be expected from his courtesy as master of the house. She went at first with a firm step, as if her strength had quite returned. But on a sudden Madeleine wavered in her advance, gave an imploring, giddy look back on the group

she was leaving, and would no doubt have fallen to the ground if Mr. Behringbright, touched by an electric shock of sympathy, had not sprung forward at the moment, and caught her round the waist, and supported her in both his arms while she fainted on his breast! At least, her whole frame appeared to lose animation—her beautiful head sunk upon his shoulder in the most approved broken lily attitude—and though her colour did not change, as her eyes closed, and she remained powerlessly drooping in that alarmed embrace,—as Dr. Bucktrout immediately certified that she *was* insensible—I do not see why any suspicion of a *feint* rather than *faint* should arise in the innocent minds either of reader or biographer on the occasion?

But whatever was the reality of the case, Mr. Behringbright took it all for gospel, and, almost swooning himself with anxiety, tenderness, and satisfaction, at being the mortal so blessed, carried the beauteous, exhausted form into the dining-room opening on the terrace, where every species of restorative was immediately called for and applied. With the happiest results in the end,—thanks as well to Dr. Bucktrout's skill, who held the pulse, and prescribed the general treatment, while Mr. Behringbright officiated with almost laughable zeal and assiduity as principal executant of the *Æsculapian* decrees. He was rewarded, however, poor man, by the exquisite expression of gratitude, confidence, and affection in those beauteous eyes, when, at last, they reopened, and perceived who was holding Mrs. Bucktrout's vinaigrette to her nostrils—whose kind arm propped her head to the exact elevation ordained by Dr. Bucktrout, on the sofa.

Of course, after this nervous crisis there could be no thought of transferring the lovely patient to any other place of quiet and repose than she had found, particularly as she expressed a great wish to remain undisturbed where she was until she was sufficiently refreshed to return to Killarney. "For," she repeatedly observed, with a species of wildness and confusion in her manner, "I don't want to remain here, dear aunt! It is not a proper place for me! I have no right, no claim—though Mr. Brownjohn is so good as to assure me of his lordship's permission. Dear Mr. Brownjohn, how very, very good you are to me! How good you all are;—his lordship, too, after saving my life at the risk of his own!"

Mr. Brownjohn was secretly touched and flattered with the notion that it was dread of the increasing interest the poor young creature felt in her casual steamer acquaintance, that induced her now to desire to leave the place *he* inhabited! At the same time he was greatly annoyed at the exaggerated estimate she seemed to form of her obligations to the young Earl, and otherwise was satisfied with the notion of her removal from a spot where so many persons knew him to be who he really was. It was so delicious to fancy himself liked and preferred for himself! So did his waking dream lap the millionaire in elysium!

The general result was that Madeleine was left in the dining-room, on her sofa, to seek some interval of repose, attended only by her aunt and Mrs. Macnab. Lady Glengariff prevailed upon her son also to retire, and change his wet clothes. Dr. Bucktrout had lunch served him in a private apartment, awaiting news of his niece; and after the whole singular episode, the Countess and Mr. Behringbright found themselves once more promenading the terrace, and discussing the circumstance. The now re-kindled elder lover, however, was not destined in the first instance to derive much satisfaction from his exchange of ideas on the subject with her ladyship. He had taken the opportunity at once to inform the Countess, that the object of her hospitable kindness was a daughter of the highly respectable Belfast family where Emily Maughan had found an asylum, and to express his interest in her on that account, when she interrupted him with singular vivacity. "I hope you feel none on your own, Mr. Behringbright? I hope not—and for *your* sake!"

"For my sake, my dear Lady Glengariff? Pray explain yourself," he replied, rather consciously, but surprised too.

"You will be vexed, and think my poor brain has gone off again on one of its flights,—and it may be so," said Lady Glengariff, passing her hand—a common gesture with her, and with other persons affected with her malady—over her brows. "But when this young girl sunk into your arms, I saw her glow out all over with a curious phosphoric lustre, like a tainted fish in the dark. . . . And wherever you touched her—your hands, your shoulder, even your left cheek—which was once close to hers—I saw you crust out also with the same sort of bright leprosy! Depend upon it, this is not a good young woman! Believe me that her soul is corrupt, almost to that degree which is moral death and putridity, and that you run the greatest risk of the contagion in approaching her!"

"What a dreadful, what a horrible notion, Lady Glengariff! Your poor head must indeed be filled with horrors to imagine this! If there be any light about Madeleine Graham, it is the light of youth, beauty, and innocence; and these appalling fancies convince me more than the most unfortunate intervals you have suffered, that your mind is radically diseased!" replied Mr. Behringbright, with strong indignation, even in his accents, and with a bitterness of expostulation which, remembering a moment after whom he was addressing, he as quickly repented. It *was*, however, a very dreadful idea; and observers endowed with Lady Glengariff's tremendous faculty—if she really possessed it—are not to be envied in this world, and do well to seclude themselves from general society.

The topic was painful to both parties, and was then dropped. But it was destined to be an eventful morning; and hardly had Lady Glengariff heard, with considerable puzzle and scrutiny, Mr. Behringbright's request that he might always be addressed as Mr. *Brownjohn* before Miss Graham, having introduced himself by that name in the family of Emily Maughan's

protectors, ere Lord Glengariff made an abrupt and exceedingly startling re-appearance on the scene. He looked as pale as his own wraith, and held an open letter in his hand, which quivered so, that the nervous shake of the paper plainly revealed his tremor. This he handed, without the utterance of a single word, to his mother. Nor did he speak to Mr. Behringbright, from whom, on the contrary, he turned with a strange expression of countenance, and, folding his arms, walked away to the battlemented edging of the terrace over the rocks on which the castle was based.

Lady Glengariff took the communication with eagerness. She recognized the handwriting of Emily Maughan.

In reality, it had happened with this letter as it often happens in such affairs. *The watched pot never boils*. What we expect with anxiety, look for at every turning, comes, after all, in general, unexpectedly; very seldom indeed to the hour and instant of our expectation. This was the only day for the last ten that Lord Glengariff had not presented himself in person for the desired reply from Emily at the Killarney post-office. And now it had come to him, when, for a short time, he had almost forgotten to expect it, in the regular course of delivery at the castle from that town.

But the contents of that long-expected despatch! Nothing good seemed implied in the young lover's aghast and pallid aspect, in his abrupt gestures and sullen withdrawal. But when the Countess had perused the letter with dazzled and staring orbs, she instinctively hurried to his side, as he stood with his moodily-folded arms, frowning down the precipitous heights of the Glengariff crags at the white stream of silver in the ravine below, that marked the descent of the O'Sullivan cataract.

"My son! my dear son! think no more of her! she prefers another—she avows it! Remember only what is due to the nobility of your birth, to the honour and pride of a man and a gentleman! Dismiss her for ever from your thoughts."

And so saying, Lady Glengariff attempted soothingly to embrace her son; but he repulsed her with an unwonted harshness—or at least withdrew himself from the maternal pressure.

"No, mother," he said, in a voice husky with emotion; "you are the cause of the misery to which the remainder of my life must be abandoned. Do not mock me with this pretended kindness!"

"You hear my son, Mr. Behringbright! But tell me in what way can I be held accountable for the contents of this unhappy letter?" said Lady Glengariff, extending the epistle to the family friend, who, alarmed by what he witnessed, had also drawn near.

"Mr. Behringbright probably knows some one who is much more responsible than your ladyship in the matter!" resumed the young man with extreme bitterness.

Taking no notice of the implied accusation, though he felt it, Mr. Behringbright took the offered paper, and read what greatly surprised as well as greatly pained him. He had not expected, from a young woman

of so much modesty and gentleness of character, so plain and almost defiantly resolute, an avowal of an attachment for another, to the man who had placed his young heart so unreservedly at her disposal, as he now found in Emily Maughan's reply to Lord Glengariff's renewed and most passionate proffer of marriage, backed by his mother's assent and invitation !

Madeleine's insidious, forged postscript had produced its full effect upon the intended victim. Her mind, already in a state of intense torture and irritation, was stung to a real madness of disdain and grief by the conviction it forced upon her, that her unreturned love for Mr. Behringbright was not only known to him, but betrayed by him in the very wantonness of cruel power and scorn. What else could Emily Maughan imagine was meant by the intimation that the Countess was aware she preferred another to her son ? Who else could she believe to have divined and divulged the secret but Mr. Behringbright ? He it must be who had offered her up a sacrifice to his own vanity ; or possibly merely with a view to get rid of a troublesome responsibility, and rescue his ward from a union with a person whom he himself (doubtless) so ineffably despised !

Emily's letter reflected the anguished and irritable state of her feelings on this consummation of her misfortunes. Suffering is nearly always unjust, and some strange principle in the human mind would seem to render it in some degree pleasant to us to make others share the ills we experience. I do not know that a row of persons in the toothache would be much consolation to each other ; but it is different, apparently, in moral afflictions ; and one would say that, although she permitted herself no other revenge on the mother, Emily had found a bitter alleviation for her own misery in heaping up that of the son. It is certain, at all events, that no refusal could be more heart-rendingly explicit—no statement of preference for another could be expressed with more unmistakable resolve and precision—than in this fatal and decisive epistle. Lord Glengariff could no longer doubt that the fate of his first, and, as he believed it, only love, was sealed !

In all other respects, Emily had more than observed the supposed injunctions and entreaties of the false postscript. She made no allusion to having received them, but desired in conclusion, with extreme coldness, to have her respectful acknowledgments of her ladyship's condescension and kindness duly presented, with her regrets that she could not avail herself of her kind recall and generous proffers.

The only sort of explicitness in which Emily failed was precisely the one that would have been disadvantageous to the plans of her secret foe. She gave no sign that she knew or suspected that this preferred " other " was Mr. Behringbright. She could not bring herself to acknowledge her feeling of his unkind and unhandsome conduct towards her in this instance by doing so. Not to mention the powerful restraints of female pride, and the indignation of a pure-minded woman, who believes that her innermost sentiments have been profaned by the cruel boasts of a traitor.

Lord Glengariff himself needed no interpreter of the reticence. "She gives a very good reason, does she not, for refusal, Mr. Behringbright?" he observed, bitterly, when that gentleman, having finished his perusal, looked inquiringly towards him. "*She loves another!*—and who can that other be, do you think, now, Mr. Behringbright?"

Mr. Behringbright felt that he could no longer stand this sort of thing; that he really ought not, considering that he had only to pronounce a word to exonerate himself from an unjust, and he began now almost to feel dishonouring and degrading, suspicion. Moreover, it occurred to him that, since the blow was struck, it would be better to make it a decisive one, mortal to hope, than to haggle on with a series of lesser wounds, under which the victim could only slowly and with protracted suffering, bleed to death.

"Well, I do think I know who that other is, Lord Glengariff," he replied, sedately, on these considerations; "and I should say you will be satisfied of the reality and hopelessness of Emily Maughan's preference for another, when I tell you it is *not* the rich Behringbright, whose pretensions to external rivalry you might justly hold in doubt and contempt; but a penniless young French adventurer, who seems endowed with the kind of exterior women admire, whom she prefers to you and all mankind besides! The very man, in short, whom you nearly threw into the pit at the Belfast Theatre; which is, in all probability, one of the reasons of the extreme hardness and insensibility to the pain she inflicts, visible in every line of this epistle."

Lord Glengariff stared, as if stupefied for a moment, at the speaker.

"How do you know this for certain?—how do you know it?—Good Heaven! is this the explanation of all your lugubrious hints and warnings? Why did you not speak out at once? Why need you have prolonged my misery so ineffably?"

"You would not have believed me on my unsupported statements. It is the explanation of my attempts to make you aware of the baseless quality of your expectations. But to declare by what means I became possessed of a secret which was confided to me under promise of preserving it one," Mr. Behringbright concluded, reflecting how uncomfortable it would be for Miss Graham to be brought into the affair while under that roof, "you must excuse me, Lord Glengariff! And, indeed, I may say that nothing but the confirmation offered by the refusal you have received satisfies me that I have been truly informed, and that Emily Maughan preserves at least so much of the natural goodness and magnanimity of her character as to persevere in the senseless preference she has formed for a contemptible, swaggering fop, in spite of the splendid allurements offered in your alliance!"

There was a short pause.

"Well, I suppose she is in the right," said Lord Glengariff; then, with a smile that probably concealed a much sharper agony than tears

ve expressed,—“*She* is in the right, and *you* are in the right, Mr. right—and my mother *was* in the right! But nothing but her e for . . . a tea-grocer’s lad, do you say the fellow is?—could have ill right again, too! Henceforth I sha’n’t trouble much more ese angel-seeming persons. I shall take up with mere mortals, se myself accordingly. And, *à propos*, that sort of charming —which, after all, are the only sort people who feel they sha’n’t ver themselves ought to go a-gadding after.—You remember how r Tithonus was served, that couldn’t die, and was always old, in nce of the stupid goddess in love with him asking immortality and forgetting to ask to keep him as young as ever for ever?— I talking about?—I wonder, I say, how that delightful Miss is getting on by this time?—Mother, shall we go and inquire?” Behringbright did not like this flighty turn in the tune at all; but dld he say? Nothing; although he felt so much annoyed and that he remained behind; while the Countess, rejoiced to son take the affair so much more lightly than she had thought proceeded on the errand with him. Mr. Behringbright, however, ery shortly after, with a different species of concern, that Dr. t pronounced his niece excessively feverish and excited, and had as a favour—which could not possibly, under the circumstances, d—that she might be allowed a bed for the night in the castle.

CHAPTER XXX.

ARMIDA IN THE CAMP OF THE CHRISTIANS.

AHAM, I am happy to report, was much better on the following day. even able to join the family dinner-party, and spend the evening y Glengariff and her son; when she was additionally favoured by a vitation from the Countess to remain at the castle for another day, wo or three; until, in short, her strength and nerves were com-stored from the shock of the immersion she had suffered. And he kinder on her ladyship’s part, since—as has been seen—she . no very particular fancy herself to the youthful visitant. But ad made it his business to request her to exhibit this mark of and Lady Glengariff was but too glad to do anything that kely to soothe and divert his mind. And it appeared, from the he paid Miss Graham, that she interested him.

hat Lady Glengariff wished or apprehended that these would re than the promptings of a momentary caprice. It appeared, spossible to her, that a young man who had loved Emily and with such passion and devotion, could, by any species of re fascination, be induced to transfer his affection to a girl who

was in almost all respects her exact opposite:—dark hair, dark eyes, a rich and glowing complexion, a manner sparkling with coquetry and allure-ment; nothing at all of the repose and virgin womanliness of withdrawal which constituted the main charm and loveliness of Emily's demeanour, and matched well with her fair and maidenly presence and person.

The opinion did not, however, seem so extremely well founded to Mr. Behringbright, who, searching into his man's heart, almost believed he found there that a passion disappointed in its object turns with impatience and disgust from the mockery of a repetition of its lost illusions, or only seeks their renewal under forms and conditions disassociated from the original cheats. Men's first and second wives, for example—to select from those greatest of all disappointments achieved in success—I think I have observed, seldom exhibit any marked resemblance, either of person or character. And though a rejected lover's case be in some respects about the reverse of an inconsolable widower's, still there are points in common that Mr. Behringbright appreciated, and which drove him to the conclusion that there was no safety in the fact that Madeleine Graham and Emily Maughan were young women very like reverses of each other in almost every mental and corporeal attribute.

What increased Mr. Behringbright's annoyance and apprehensions in the affair was, that he was not present at the dinner Miss Graham was enabled to partake of on declaring her convalescence, and consequently knew not exactly how things went on at it. Lord Glengariff himself satirically pointed out to him, that the young lady would be much surprised if she found a person in the rank it had pleased him to make the acquaintance of the Graham family,—who seemed to have only come on an errand from his master to a nobleman's residence,—placed at the table, and treated on an equality with the family and their guests. George Cocker could not deny the incongruity. Nay, anxious more than ever to sustain his incognito, he had resolved to excuse himself on this very ground when the occasion should arise. But Lord Glengariff's anticipation and seeming urgency in the matter greatly annoyed and disquieted him.

His absence from the party, however (the reasons of which it is probable Madeleine perfectly divined), contributed to a result that relieved him. He learned from Mr. Molloy, the house steward, that a carriage had been ordered for the evening, to convey the "drowned young lady" home to her hotel, and that she had declined the Countess's invitation to remain as much longer as she could make it convenient at the castle—"And though my lord himself asked it as the biggest favour in life," the puzzled official added.

The truth is, Madeleine Graham, acting under the light of her own clear intellects and full private information on the subject, was not for a moment the dupe of the young lord's sudden outbreak of gallantry towards her. Else might she have fallen into a great error; and, stimulated

sides by her natural spirit of coquetry, might have entered on the sly process of making herself a seat between two stools.

I have no doubt in my own mind that she would have preferred Lord Glengariff to Mr. Behringbright, in himself. He was by far the handsomer and younger man—ranked higher in society, although Madeleine did not value rank at much. Indeed, no philosopher of the most republican school did ever, it is likely, cherish so real and genuine a contempt for the prejudices of society, as regarded such mere external and adventitious claims to distinction. And Lord Glengariff was of very competent revenue, though not by any means so rich as the elder candidate for favour. But with all these pleas in his lordship's behalf, there was one great and saving drawback. Madeleine was thoroughly in the secret of that affectation of a sudden fascination and enthralment feigned by Lord Glengariff; and knew that it was merely a reaction of despair and disdain at the treatment he must by this time have sustained from Emily Maughan; for she calculated to an hour when the reply would arrive at Glengariff, and the quotient had been one of her motives to resolve to place herself there in readiness to watch over the emergency, at the particular time she did. Her expressions to her deliverer on the subject were part of the plan. No considerations sufficed now to turn her from the precipitous steps, in point of fact forced upon her, by her audacious original act of treason against Emily Maughan.

She built no hopes, therefore, on Lord Glengariff's proceedings, nor dreamed of changing her course of action on so fitful and unsubstantial gale of opportunity. Contrariwise, the over-acted and delusive scorn of the pretence only increased her irritation against its prompting cause. And this—since she had injured Emily Maughan so deeply and perilously—was fast deepening into as strong a feeling of hatred and dread as bosom—all whose impulses began and ended in self—could be supposed capable of. But, in truth, the men and women who are thoroughly of our age and their age, neither love nor hate to any extraordinary excess, but make their feelings of all kinds subordinate exclusively to their interests. Madeleine perceived a means to advance her own ends in Lord Glengariff's love, but otherwise it did not much distract her attention. Even to annoy Emily with the notion of her rejected lover's speedy forgetting and answer of affection—which was most likely his lordship's fevered, pettish motive—had only a slight and occasional attraction for her.

Thus, on full deliberation, Madeleine determined to declare herself convalescent on the next morning after the accident. What use was there, in the first place, to lie in bed in a remote chamber in an old castle, attended by an old woman, and occasionally visited in state by a countess, whose son she did not intend to marry, and who might ask inconvenient questions?—for Madeleine never liked to hazard more falsehood than was absolutely necessary for her purposes. No one else was likely to enter a young lady's sick-room. The purpose of her visit to the castle seemed accomplished, if there was any

credit to be placed in Mr. Behringbright's enamoured looks—in the perseverance with which Mr. *Brownjohn* asked, hour by hour, after her progress towards recovery! If there was any use in exhibiting the languid interesting airs of an invalid, that could be done. Wherever she now retired, Armida felt she should be followed. At the same time she could give a signal proof how little the homage with which she was treated by the master of Glengariff Castle had temptation for so true and generous a soul! She had, therefore, the sagacity and firmness to refuse the very kind invitation of the Countess to remain until her strength was quite restored, which was pressingly seconded by her son. "A million, million thanks, dear Lady Glengariff, and my Lord!" she said, her eyes filling with tears of gratitude as she refused, in the hearing of Mr. Molloy and Nora Macnab; "but in spite of all your goodness, I do not feel at home in great mansions, among persons so superior in rank to myself. I need rest and quiet above all things, and I shall find them best at the hotel where we are staying. Uncle himself recommended it, who saw how much better I was when he left me last night, to tell them not to be alarmed at Prospect Palace. Dear aunt is quite frightened and unhappy at the idea of mamma and papa hearing of the accident. Only, before I went, I should like to thank that kind Mr. Brownjohn for the extreme care and goodness aunt says he showed for me when I was so ill yesterday—unless he has started for London again,—has he?"

No: Mr. Brownjohn was still at Glengariff, having only just ascertained that his business there must be a failure.

"Your devoted governess, Miss Emily Maughan—Mr. Brownjohn's cousin—refuses to return to us," said Lady Glengariff, with a spasmodic smile.

"I was afraid so—afraid for poor dear Emily's own sake. But people who have sweethearts—especially we stupid young girls—don't like to leave the places where they live," said Madeleine, quite artlessly.

The Countess looked at her son with a mixture of indignation in her compassion; who started up and exclaimed,—

"Very well, Miss Graham! if you *will* go, I will be your attendant cavalier back to your uncle's charge! You very pretty young ladies require looking after!" and then he burst into a discordant, apparently causeless laugh, and was silent for a good time after.

That same evening, accordingly, Miss Graham, persisting in her arrangement, left Glengariff, in the family carriage, for Prospect Palace, Killarney, under the young Earl's convoy. Not, however, until she had seen and most cordially thanked Mr. *Brownjohn* for all his goodness to her; that gentleman being informed of her particular wish to do so by Mr. Molloy.

He came—a good deal embarrassed, and pleased, and vexed, almost equally, to find she was quitting such a dangerous society, *as it is*—to the castle gate, where Lord Glengariff awaited to hand her into the vehicle

He was a witness of her really earnest entreaty to be allowed to dispense with the needless trouble his lordship was giving himself in escorting her back, and had even the happiness to hear her say, "If any one is necessary, I am sure *Mr. Brownjohn* will kindly go with me!" And this expression was accompanied with a look almost of entreaty, that went to his heart, and compelled him to say, "His lordship desires the honour, Miss Graham; but I trust I shall see you again if you remain any longer on the lakes. I intend a pedestrian tour of a few days among them." What a bright expression of assent shone up over the enchantress's features, as she replied, "Oh, how glad you make me! We are not going yet. We have seen nothing yet—almost—and my uncle has not half tired of his fishing!" Mr. Behringbright was a doomed man from that hour—and he knew it.

It is my impression that Lord Glengariff's absence from the castle on the occasion referred to, appeared most unusually long to his guest; but, in reality, he did not return till late in the evening—hours after he easily might have made his reappearance. He found Mr. Behringbright sitting up for him, trying hard to make believe he was reading a book, which was certainly open in his hands,—"*The Collegians*," of poor Gerald Griffin; which, like most works of original genius, was so little appreciated in that form, that a bustling charlatan almost carried off the honours of the invention, and a consequent fortune, before its real author was well cold in his neglected grave—under the takingly incomprehensible rechristening of "*The Colleen Bawn*."

"Waiting for me, Mr. Behringbright?" said Lord Glengariff, with a caustic smile. "That fascinating young creature!—I really could not tear myself away from her society before it became almost rudely late—and Dr. Bucktrout would have me stay supper with them. He's a jolly old fellow in his way, and would drink our three lakes dry if they were milk punch! I shall be often over in Killarney now; because 'I've nothing else to do,' as the song says."

"And I am going to make Killarney my head-quarters for a few days' wanderings," replied Mr. Behringbright, as carelessly as he could manage it; "and then I shall go home. I am very glad to see how quietly and like a sensible young fellow you take that absurd girl's refusal, Ferdinand; and I feel I can comfortably leave you to your mother's consolations. I have explained to her that my affairs no longer allow me to remain away—have taken my farewell of her—and did not betake myself to bed till you came home, in order to do the same to you, because I shall be off very early in the morning."

"Oh, you are going to stay a few days at Killarney, are you, Mr. Behringbright?" returned the young Earl, with a somewhat lurid expression rising in his features. "Good! very good! You will then be a witness how *very* sensibly I mean to behave myself on this occasion. Moore recommends it, you know,—

'When we are far from the lips that we love,
We have but to make love to the lips we are near!'

I shall amuse myself—but not in the mad way I went on at Belfast. Like a *steady, old, knowing sinner, you know—on the sly!*—no parade of noise. You don't quite understand me now, I dare say; but you will fore we have done with each other!"

Mr. Behringbright did *not* understand;—how should he?—at least said he did not, though he coloured rather vehemently. "However don't matter," he concluded, taking up his bed-candle. "I suppose Bucktrout's punch *has* been good—particularly strong, at all events! wish you a good night, Glengariff, and no headache in the morning."

"Thank you," replied the Earl, drily. "You are always very good to me, Mr. Behringbright; the only misfortune is, that I have taken fancy you are not quite such a saint as you give yourself out to be at present! Didn't they say you spent a little fortune on that Incognita, and amused yourself by making her the jest of the town? And what is the meaning of your going to Killarney now, *incog.*, after this splendid girl?"

"I conceive that I owe no account to you at least, Lord Glengariff," said Mr. Behringbright, with indignation.

"I beg your pardon, sir; haven't you read in at least a hundred romances that when a young fellow saves a girl's life, he always falls in love with her afterwards, and protects her against everybody else that wants to devour her?"

"Good night, Lord Glengariff! You rave as usual; but I hope morning will see you restored to your sober senses!"

So saying, the ex-guardian arose, and left the apartment with an air of offended dignity.

"All very fine," mused Lord Glengariff, left alone; "but I'll wait for the old boy's game, and see what he is after! If he is capable of such designs on this girl, who knows what may be the real state of the affair between him and Emily? I don't half believe this story of the Frenchman; it don't seem likely in the least! But I'll know the truth of the whole affair before long; and if he has been cheating me—if he wronged Emily, and traduced her with another, I will have his head on a pole, if he were twenty times my father's friend, and my own guardian. And when I questioned this knowing girl, who is Emily's friend and confidante, she declared she was convinced, whatever attachment that poor deluded girl had formed,—those were her very words,—that it was for some reason or other a profoundly unhappy one! Well, I have heard these honest seeming fellows are often enough the worst at heart! But *he* won't do so easily as perhaps he thinks!"

THE WIFE'S MISSION.

DRAW close, yet closer to me, as I sing,
 That I may feel thy breath upon my cheek,
 And read within thy dark, expressive eyes
 Thy inmost thoughts before thy lips can speak.

O joy! to think a voice like mine can wake
 Thy sweetest smile, and chase afar the care
 That left its trace on that high brow and pale,
 Silv'ring before its time thy raven hair.

Now lay thy gentle hand upon my head.
 How do my pulses thrill at that light touch!
 Ah! how, when hope was trembling in my breast,
 I prized its clasp! Dear hand! I owe it much.

It gave me title, wealth, a right to bear
 Thy noble name, to act a true wife's part;
 And as the casket shrines the precious gem,
 With them it gave, to crown them all, thy heart.

I know that in thy youth thou didst love one
 With lovelier face and fairer form than mine;—
 Why droop the fringes of those calm, deep eyes?
 I treasure, too, that memory of thine.

She is in heaven; but if from that bright place
 Her spirit can behold this lower earth,
 Will it not be for her one blessing more,
 That in thy soul love once again had birth?

I'll sing no more to-night.—Come, let us throw
 The window wide, and gaze upon the scene;
 Thus let me stand with earnest looks upturn'd,
 Whilst thou upon my faithful arm dost lean.

The moon rides high in heaven,—a pearl of price,
 Set in the blue serene of that deep sky;
 And in pale beauty, trembling with delight,
 One faithful star doth bear her company.

There the broad Thames glides on in silver mist,
 Save where the rippling waters kiss the light,
 Losing the turbid stains of fretting day
 In the sweet influence of solemn night.

The distant shore is lost in haze ; but stilly,
Like purest love, the blessed dew falls ever,
Without one thought of gratitude ; refreshing
Earth's weary spots, by human eye seen never.

Dark lie the shadows on the sloping lawn ;
All shapes look strange in that fantastic gloom ;
In the soft breeze the slender aspens shiver,
And heavily floats by a faint perfume.

But something ails thee ; for the tranquil brow
Contracts, and o'er it spreads the flush of pain.
Too much for thy worn frame the chill of even,—
Come, let us turn to fireside joys again.

Now rest thee on thy couch ; each silken pillow
Shall by my hand be soft and easy made ;
Heavily sweeps the curtains' festoon'd crimson,
Mellow the lamplight through that Parian shade.

Here are the flowers I gather'd fresh this morning ;
Stay, let me place them thus to please thine eye.
Here is the book that charm'd us yester even,—
Say, shall I read ? but no, I hear thee sigh.

Perchance my cares but weary thee, though springing
From deepest love ; and yet I cannot bear
The burden for thee even one short hour ;
I can but wrestle for thee in strong prayer.

Is, then, the pang so keen ?—the gathering tear,
The quivering lip,—oh, anything but this !
What do I hear ? 'tis but the o'erwrought feeling
Relieving thus too exquisite a bliss.

"Health would be dearly purchased, if with it
Thou must this atmosphere of love resign,
With the sweet truth that in man's darkest hour
Woman's devotion doth most brightly shine."

God bless thee for those words ! In their great strength
The anxious fears of this fond heart shall cease ;
So press we on together to that rest
Where faith and hope are sight, and all is peace !

KINGSWOOD CLARE.

THE ST. JAMES'S MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1863.

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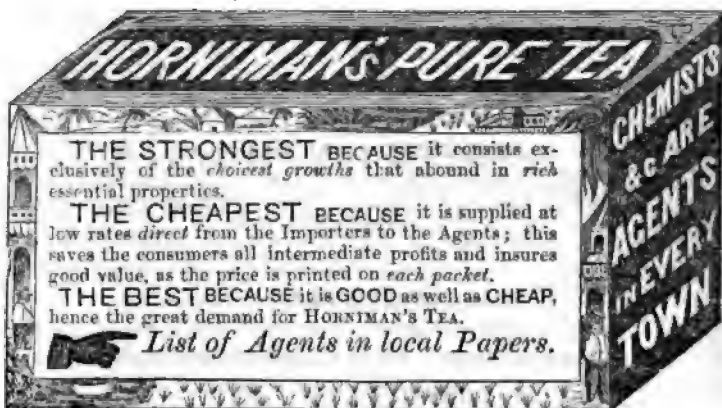
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AUBREY MARSTON;
OR, A GAME OF SPECULATION.

CHAPTER XXX.

RUSHTON RESOLVES TO RIDE OUT THE GALE.

WHATEVER suspicions I may have given way to during the unfavourable rumours which were circulated on every side, of the essential rottenness which pervaded the commercial world, I could observe no change in the attitude of Rushton towards myself. As he formerly took an unusual interest in my success, so he now seemed to encourage every hope of my eventually getting clear of the difficulties which beset me. It is true his credit and personal honour were in some measure at stake, for it was owing to his advice that I had been induced to embark to the extent which I had done, and to make a selection of certain speculative securities which, in a period of crisis, were looked upon as almost valueless. Again and again I asked myself what could be the motive of his effort to enrich me. I was only an acquaintance of his later years, and doubtless many older friends had higher claims upon him. Nor could I think that there was anything in the character of my association or companionship so congenial to his own tastes as to compensate him for the time and trouble he devoted. Perhaps, after all, I was only one of many; and Mr. Burley, the noble lord, Mr. M'Phun, and others might readily have put a similar question to themselves, and sought to discover the ulterior motives which influenced Sir Bedford.

But the assistance of Rushton was now become more necessary than ever. Mere encouragement to persevere was not sufficient in such a moment of embarrassment and difficulty. My balances were being

rapidly absorbed by the frequency of the calls made in respect of undertakings which were only half afloat. Their originators, actuated as they were by a spirit of infatuation, and determined to put to sea in the midst of a storm, appealed without scruple to every solvent man for support to carry out their design of self-immolation, persuaded that everything must now fall, and that it was better to perish in the company of one's fellows than solitarily await inevitable destruction.

"What can you do with a flock of sheep?" said Rushton, contemptuously, when I appealed to him for advice as to how to avoid the increasing pressure. "They have been bitten by a few rabid animals and you cannot reason with them. *Sauve qui peut* seems to be the motto in these times, and we must go with the stream," said he, shrugging his shoulders.

"But these calls," said I, writhing at the idea, "dropping in one after another."

"Ay; as long as you are solvent you must bleed. There is no alternative but to suffer, and all that you have yet to learn. A man has no only need of the first principle I have so often urged, namely, nerve and boldness; but he must also have the fortitude which springs from passive endurance. When the storm blows over, the reaction will be proportionate in your case. When you are conscious that the danger is past your spirits will rise, and you will laugh at your own fears and those of others."

"But it seems to me," said I, with some tremulousness of voice, "that the danger increases. Where is it to end? Yesterday the Argentine Bonds would have brought half what I gave for them; but to-day they tell me they are worthless—waste paper, in fact."

"Who says so?" exclaimed Rushton, fiercely.

"Why, my bankers. They refused a loan upon the deposit of more than £200,000 stock—the Argentine Bonds."

"What, after giving them the use of your balances for six good months?" cried Sir Bedford, with an angry, menacing gesture.

"Yes. They would not take the Argentine Bonds at any price."

"Ah! put not your trust in bankers. Just like them all. They never gave a helping hand yet to a man when he really wanted it. They heap their stores upon their customers willingly enough in fair weather but when they are in a fix, then they turn tail. They have no bowels of compassion—not they. Banks are like what my Lord Thurlow said once of corporations generally. I need not repeat the saying; but I should like to give your friend a lesson as to what part of the body I should cut the pound of flesh from, if it ever came to my turn to take it;" and Sir Bedford gave a hoarse chuckle at his joke. "There is danger of another sort," said he, in a more subdued tone. "You remember the hint I threw out regarding the want of honesty and good faith on the part of De Castro two months ago at Hampton Severn?"

"Yes," cried I, eagerly; "has anything transpired?"

"Well, a suspicion only as yet. I fear, in short, he has not been keeping close. His nerves are not equal to the occasion. He never had an original idea of his own; and when the highways are broken down, and the waters out, he loses all self-possession. I cannot depend upon him as I used to do. In our present difficulties he is like a child. But should he prove false,"—and Sir Bedford's brow darkened as he spoke,—"should he end his career by an act of treachery to me, I will crush him!" and Rushton, suiting the action to the word, wrenched round the muscles of his wrist as if he held the secretary within his powerful grasp.

"I have found him in every respect so far useful and faithful to me," said I, desirous to elicit further information.

"Oh, he can be true when it suits his purpose. But I have my hand upon him. He is without a friend in the world, and he shall starve!"

"But what do you suspect?" I asked, fearing lest the response of Rushton should reveal some insidious design on the part of De Castro. "What is the matter?"

"Why, that I have taken a decisive course," said Sir Bedford, with calmness and energy. "I have discharged De Castro, as a man dangerous to our interests; and I don't care whether he starves or not."

"But you forget the extent of confidence which I have been forced to repose in him."

"Oh, don't be alarmed. He will come to terms. I tell you he has not a friend in the world but myself," said Sir Bedford, triumphantly. "Yes; he is dismissed—he is gone; and if you should go into the City to-morrow, you won't be surprised if you don't find him at his post."

"Gone!" said I, in a voice of astonishment—"De Castro gone? How can we do without him?"

"Very easily," said Rushton, in his dry, laconic way. "I tell you he is better out of sight at present. His stomach, depend upon it, will bring him to terms. If he had one fault, it was that of being a gourmand; and be assured it will prove a powerful means of securing his return and perfect docility."

"This is the most serious shock I have encountered since the commencement of the crisis," said I, giving way to a full confession of my anxiety at the decisive action of Sir Bedford.

"Tush! You are alarmed; but your fears are exaggerated. I tell you the step was a prudent one under the circumstances; and for the present you must forbear to inquire the exact cause of the secretary's dismissal, consoling yourself with the conviction that you shall know everything by-and-bye." He gave me an encouraging smile, and with the view of changing the conversation asked, "When do you intend to drop down to De Maintenon? You have not been there now for months. For my own part, I mean to avoid town as much as possible until these difficulties blow over. Yes; the country is too rich, England is too strong to sink

under a crisis. Think how many a worse trial it has survived ; but come what may, remember that I have been acting for your permanent interests not to advance my own."

"Oh, Sir Bedford, I have never once doubted your honour. I may have had some delusions; my extreme anxiety may have made me suspicious; but I feel that you have only been ministering throughout to my own expressed wishes, and I should be ashamed in a moment of difficulty to accuse you as the author of these reverses."

Upon this frank avowal, which came spontaneously from my heart, Sir Bedford seized my hand, pressed it warmly within his own, and said in an assuring voice,—

"You are too anxious; you are too young. Let us change the subject. Speak of anything but business.—Now, when I recollect, tell me when did you last see *Mademoiselle de Montfort*?"

This sudden diversion of the conversation into a different channel perhaps surprised me a little at first; but I concluded that Sir Bedford seeing the evident anxiety under which I laboured, had mentioned the name of Louise as likely to arouse my interest. He had not, indeed, spoken of her for many weeks past; and knowing the position in which Fairfax stood in regard to her, I was by no means anxious to revive a painful subject of conversation. In my frank moments I made no secret to Rushton of the extent of my admiration of her personal beauty and musical accomplishment; and I found that he, on all occasions, endorsed these praises, and seemed peculiarly gratified at finding that it was a theme on which we happened to be exactly agreed.

In reply to Sir Bedford's inquiry, I remarked that I had seen Louise only once since we parted at Hampton Severn; but that since she had arrived in London I had been favoured with many invitations to musical parties at her guardian's.

"And you go, of course?" said Sir Bedford.

"Why," said I, in a hesitating and diffident way, "not only do these affairs in the City unfit me for all pleasure at the present moment but, to confess the truth, I am somewhat distressed to witness the anxiety which I fear my presence revives in the memory of Louise. My associations always revert to that most unhappy attachment—"

"Oh, don't mention his attachment," said Sir Bedford, abruptly interrupting me. "Speak not of Fairfax—he is fallen!"

"He has indeed been rash and inconsiderate. His impulsiveness even leads him into avowals, which although they are not insincere at the moment (for they seem to spring from his heart), yet he never considers the necessity of carrying them into effect. Forethought he never had."

"He is very weak," said Sir Bedford, with an almost contemptuous expression. "I pity him; more like a woman than a man. But he shall not escape as easily as he fancies."

"And this new and unaccountable attachment for Constance Wynd-

ham," said I, desirous of imparting a ray of hope in favour of Louise, "may end like all his pursuits. When he has gained the prize, he will give up the chase; and duty will then suggest a sense of compunction, and the desire of forgiveness. My firm impression is that Louise is still in his thoughts, and there is no saying where they may yet fix themselves."

"He is not worth the calculation," said Sir Bedford, turning on his heel with a sense of increasing irritation.—"Come, when do you visit De Maintenon? My almond trees will be soon again in bloom."

"Impossible, I fear, to give you a promise at present; for to-morrow I set out for Hurstfield, the seat of Sir Charles Wyndham. Perhaps on my return—"

"To Hurstfield?" said Sir Bedford, in surprise. "It seems to me that you do not act wisely, nor as a business man, to bury yourself in a remote part of the country at this moment. Consider the aspect of affairs."

"But I am sick of the City. I long for relief. Besides, my stay will be short, and I hope to communicate with you daily."

"Oh, you doubtless find the Baronet a pleasant sort of companion," said Sir Bedford, in an ironical tone. "You can converse on the merits of the turnip fallow, the destructive effects of red rust, the blight in the hop-vine, and other interesting matters. I fancied the sale of the Marston Estate would have dissipated some of those charms in your eyes; but possibly they still haunt your imagination like the poetic reveries of Mr. M'Phun, who went off in such high dudgeon at our last board meeting; and I suppose he has been crying *O Rus!* with might and main in some obscure retreat ever since the commencement of the crisis. Pray give my best regards to Sir Charles,—our acquaintance is but slight; we have so few ideas in common."

"Just so. Sir Charles, as you said, is somewhat reserved in manner on a first acquaintance. But perhaps you may have an opportunity of modifying your opinion when you know more of him."

"That, I think, is by no means likely," said Sir Bedford, significantly. "Sir Charles Wyndham and I travel different roads."

"Oh, I am aware he is quite at sea in financial matters; or, perhaps, he may be prejudiced."

"Oh, he prefers family occupations, I see. Well, I never fancied a bucolic cast of mind. But of course you will return to town when this fever of the brain passes off. Perhaps a run in the country may freshen you up; but don't waste time there,—particularly," added he, in a significant tone, "on such an occasion as the present, when you should have all your wits about you. And, what is more, let me advise you not to be soft-hearted or sympathetic at Hurstfield; for where women most do congregate, there is always a little plotting against single blessedness

going forward, and I should be sorry to hear of your catching a worse fever than that from which you are now running away;" and Sir Bedford made an effort to force a smile, which only served to exaggerate the disappointment he artfully sought to conceal.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A VISIT TO HURSTFIELD.

FAIRFAX had written to me in the highest spirits, to say that Sir Charles and his daughter having resolved to visit Italy next autumn, they expected I would make my visit into the country at an earlier period than that agreed upon. This circumstance offered a reasonable excuse for my immediate departure, and the presence of Fairfax as a guest at Hurstfield served also to remove any feeling of hesitation as to the propriety of my visit.

What a relief it was, after being cooped up in town for two months, harassed and worn out by a thousand causes of anxiety, to find myself once more in sight of the green fields bathed in the sunshine of an April day! The season was prematurely advanced, and every object around was calculated to suggest a feeling of forgetfulness. But the genial influence was for a long time unfelt; and I had proceeded more than halfway on my journey, oppressed by a sense of stupor, ere I fully opened my eyes to the consciousness of the beauty of the landscape through which I was rapidly being borne.

New sources of difficulty and embarrassment now began to occur to my mind. How should I conduct myself with reference to Sir Charles and his daughters in the midst of the reverses which threatened me? Should I not be playing a false part to hold myself out as a man of independent means, when the whole of my fortune was embarked in enterprises which good judges pronounced to be at best but very questionable speculations? What if Sir Charles should hold out to me the same encouragement as he did to Fairfax?—should I be justified in keeping concealed from him my connection with Rushton, and the altered circumstances in which I stood?

I felt that this invitation had left much in my power. It was an admission of confidence on the part of Sir Charles, and the time was now come for me to act upon the advances he had made, and show myself more frank in my communications with him. It was a matter of impossibility that I should be able much longer to screen the fact that a secret and potent influence had been winding itself about my heart ever since the day I had been struck with the beauty and gentle manner of Adela Wyndham. I reflected now with pain how my own diffidence in my resources—my

excess of sensitiveness lest a reflection should be cast upon the inferiority of my position—had been the real cause which prompted me to embark in my wild career of speculation. My want of confidence now caused a double sense of hesitation and embarrassment. I doubted whether I had not already gone too far in my professions towards Adela, and that my best course would be to make my present visit to Hurstfield an available opportunity of breaking off an attachment against which circumstances seemed to protest, and to make an honourable avowal of the cause.

Musing on the subject of the difficulty of my position, without coming to any conclusion as to how I should act, I drew towards my destination as evening advanced. From an elevation I now caught the first view of the broad and undulating ridge of the south downs rising far in the distance over the Weald of Sussex, and presenting, as it were, a barrier against the encroachments of the sea. The country on all sides contained much heath and broken ground, the tops of the hills being thickly wooded, and the enclosures numerous. The comparative wildness of the scene, after just passing through the vale appropriately termed the Garden of England, brought the first sense of relief to my jaded spirits. I felt how pleasant it was to be alone with nature at such a moment; what sources of enjoyment were in the power of simple, unambitious minds; and how harsh was the contrast of City life with the stillness and repose of that vast expanse of landscape, which seemed to harbour no discontented spirit but my own.

The manor-house of Hurstfield was at length before me. I paused at the old-fashioned lodge entrance. I admired the quaint ornaments of the pillars, almost obliterated by time; and as the gates closed behind me I felt an involuntary desire to retrace my steps, rather than make the confession required.

I wound along the closely planted avenue for at least a quarter of a mile, amid the cawing of a host of rooks, which had taken up a congenial abode in the top of a grove of half-decayed lime trees flanking one side of the mansion. Everything, from the *parterre* to the shrubbery, evinced an exquisite taste for order and neatness, and the presence of a vigilant superintendence. The gardener and his men were now busy among the grounds and along the skirts of the avenue, which had been laid out with the best effect, and commanded views in different directions through wide vistas of forest trees and plantations, that highly ornamented, and at the same time showed the great extent of the undulating park.

The manor of Hurstfield was an ancient patrimony, and had escaped the general distribution of lands after the Conquest. The men of Kent in those days having claimed for the Saxon thane the guaranteed possession of his hereditary rights, Sir Charles, proud of his hereditary descent and family traditions, was naturally fond of Hurstfield. He had been from boyhood a devoted student of landscape gardening and Evelyn's "*Sylva*:" Price too "*On the Picturesque*," and "*Gilpin*," were volumes in his library.

To beautify his grounds had been one of the chief amusements of his leisure; and as there was ample material in the locality to work upon all ready fashioned to his hand—an abundance of ancient forest, and a large extent of broken ground—he had succeeded in making his locality one sought much by artists and lovers of the picturesque. Miles of avenue wound along the escarpment of the hills in the form of natural terraces; new plantations were laid out in belts that peeped up behind hills and rose out of hollows, breaking the view of the distant country at the most favourable points, and, by occasionally shutting in the vision, creating effects of surprise when the traveller, emerging from the deep shade of the trees, was met by a glorious burst of sunshine lighting up hill and dale to the foot of the south downs. While I paused to admire one of these ingenious improvements upon natural scenery, my eye caught, at a distant turn of the road, three figures on horseback, which showed themselves for an instant, and then suddenly disappeared behind the copse. My heart beat quick, and I almost envied Fairfax that happy temperament which could discharge all feeling of self-reproach from his mind, forget the remembrance of his injustice to Louise, and indulge fresh visions of hope as freely as in the past had ceased to possess any remorseful power over his thoughtless and buoyant nature.

CHAPTER XXXII.

PLAYING A PART.

IN vain did I struggle to shake myself free from the thoughts which oppressed me; but my mind seemed capable only of one idea. I was brooding perpetually over the misfortune of my connection with Rushton and the hopeless nature of my embarrassments. I was ashamed of my conduct in the presence of friends who strove to make me happy. It was folly to make feigned excuses; worse still to tell the truth. I resolved therefore, to continue to play a part—a base, unworthy part—until circumstances rendered concealment no longer possible.

At any other time how happy should I have felt in that quiet old mansion, conversing with Sir Charles, or riding by the side of those two fair girls among the green glades of Hurstfield! I fancied that the manner of Adela was more frank and affable towards myself. She seemed to league with Fairfax and her sister in their disposition to rally me, on account of the silent and abstracted moods into which I was continually relapsing when a pause occurred in the conversation. I made an effort to arouse myself into animation. I joined in the laugh raised against myself, and talked incoherently on all matters, while my thoughts were far away, busy with cares and anxieties from which I vainly struggled to disengage my mind.

"What shall be our route to-day, papa?" cried Adela, leading the way, on the morning after my arrival at Hurstfield, towards the portico where Fairfax and Constance were already awaiting their horses.

"Make your own choice," said Sir Charles; "and as I cannot accompany you, I must leave you all in the custody of Mr. Marston. Perhaps, as we have the wind in the south-east, you had better take the road by Poining's Wood. That will give you the best view of the Weald; and then you can take the Abbey on your return."

"But Mr. Marston is such a stranger," observed Constance, in a tone of protest. "It seems to me that he should know something more of our district before we can vote him to the office of conductor."

"Oh, I confess," said I, "that I have need of a cicerone, and must place myself entirely in the hands of the ladies."

"Bravo!" cried Fairfax. "Did you ever hear so modest a confession before from a cavalier?"

"Oh, here are the horses at last," said Constance, clapping her hands, as the grooms turned the angle of the shrubbery, and led the animals to the front entrance. We were all somewhat impatient to mount; and Fairfax and I having swung our fair charges into the saddle, we took position by their side, and awaited the final orders of Sir Charles.

"Now, remember not to over-exert yourself, my girl," cried he. "You are not strong, Constance.—Mr. Marston, do keep a check on that wild truant," seeing Fairfax and Constance bound off at a canter as soon as they were mounted.

Sir Charles shook his head menacingly at Fairfax, and, waving frequent adieux to us, kept his eyes fixed upon the party until we were completely out of sight.

"Let them go," said Adela; "poor Constance cannot ride far without soon pulling up."

We were alone; and I felt at that moment a calm happiness mingled with many secret anxieties. Dare I confess to my companion the source of either? Here was an opportunity of making a confession for myself, and perhaps to one who would view it with indulgence; but my courage was unequal to the occasion, and as soon as we came suddenly upon a ruined Saxon church, enclosed within the park, the tenor of our conversation seemed to take a graver tone, and I fancied the voice of Adela sounded more sympathizingly in my ear; as if she had discovered that a weight rested on my memory, of which I desired to disburden myself. But again the blighting vision of the past rose before me, mingled with fears regarding my equivocal connection with Rushton, and the consequences of an exposure in case of failure. It was evident that the avowal could not long be deferred. My language, like my thoughts, was incoherent and abstracted. I praised the charming scenery of the district, the freshness of the day, and the pleasures of a residence in the country; but I felt that my observations were unmeaning and trite; that a cloud

rested upon my brow, and a weight was on my heart, from which no power on earth could at that moment free me.

I was silent, too, and abstracted throughout the evening, and Sir Charles vainly endeavoured to infuse a sense of enjoyment by detailing the gossip of the neighbourhood. I felt that I was unfit for society, and resolved to abstract myself. Fairfax, however, amply made up for my deficiency. Sir Charles was evidently flattered by the marked attentions to his daughter; and as Arthur could exercise an unusual fascination when he was in the humour to do so, the impressible heart of Constance was secretly giving way to the influence of his efforts to please.

Sir Charles called for music, and Adela having seated herself at the piano, Constance and Fairfax united their voices in one of his favourite melodies. I listened in pleased abstraction. Strange that my thoughts flowed back to the evening when I witnessed the performance of "Lucrezia" in the box of Louise. I remembered distinctly all my peculiar sensations on that occasion,—the vision which disturbed my sleep, my subsequent friendship with Rushton, and the precipitation with which I had yielded to his seductive counsels.

"I fear you are again somewhat abstracted to-night," remarked Constance, glancing archly towards her sister. "Very unkind of you not to give me any of your applause; and that is more mortifying, as I have become somewhat vain of late."

"If I did not applaud just now, it was not because I was insensible to the excellence of the music. Indeed, I was much moved; both the words and the air are so very touching."

"Still that is saying very little for me," persisted Constance, evidently desirous of eliciting a personal compliment in favour of their joint performance.

"You see you have made him sad," said Fairfax, in a confidential whisper. "You have triumphed to-night—made another conquest."

Constance, looked up in his face reproachfully, to which Fairfax responded by a look of affection, which had the immediate effect of restoring her to good humour. I took the hint suggested by her vanity, and passed a full though well-deserved compliment upon the joint performance of Constance and her lover.

The face of Sir Charles wore a smile of peculiar happiness in the presence of his children, and he more than once alluded to the pleasure which the prospect of a journey through Italy would afford. In this casual conversation I learned for the first time, not without surprise, that it had been already decided that Fairfax should form one of the party; and when Sir Charles bluntly asked whether my engagements were of so onerous a nature as to prevent me taking a little relaxation on the Continent, I hesitated at first, made some excuses; and on Fairfax protesting that there was no possible ground for my refusal, I allowed myself—

perhaps with secret satisfaction—to give an unconditional promise to join in the excursion.

"*Solamen tabulae*," said Sir Charles, rising and consulting the time-piece. "I beg pardon; my children, you forget the hour. It won't do to get into town habits in the country.—You have found, I presume, ere this, that we are very early folks at Hurstfield," said he, turning to me. "But we don't mean to force you and Fairfax off to bed as if you were simple rustics like ourselves."

Sir Charles pressed a kiss upon the forehead of each of his daughters, and with a "Bless you, my children!" withdrew.

On retiring to the quietude of my own room, my thoughts immediately reverted to the old train of anxiety which had oppressed and saddened me throughout the day, aggravated as it was by a communication which I had received from Rushton that morning, and which I did not dare to open. It was an almost peremptory command to return without delay to London, with the view of conferring with him on new difficulties which had arisen. My credit, he alleged, was at stake, and a delay might prove an embarrassment which no subsequent effort could rectify.

"I have but one answer to this," said I, with a sort of dogged determination. "I will *not* stir. I will no longer be bored by the counsels of this man. Why is every pleasure to be frustrated?—the society of my most valued friends to be perpetually broken in upon by considerations of money? Am I never to enjoy a moment's peace? Rushton says my position is one of peril. Well, let the worst come to the worst, I will abide by the result. I can only sustain, at most, a pecuniary loss. Who can reproach me with anything but my folly?"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WORDS OF STRANGE OMEN.

AND so, just as my intercourse with Adela Wyndham ripened into intimacy, and her real worth became more apparent, fortune seemed to reverse all my calculations, and to diminish day by day the prospect of an alliance. In short, the vision of ideal happiness which I had figured to myself some months before was dissipated by the very means by which I sought to secure the realization. Doubt and irresolution embarrassed me at every step. How could I venture to disclose to Sir Charles the real state of my affairs at that moment? What interpretation would he put upon my intimacy with Rushton? I should have even preferred making all these avowals to Adela personally rather than to Sir Charles, as I fancied he would be likely to give a less indulgent interpretation to the motives which actuated me in embarking in these pursuits, into which I had been tempted by the over-sanguine calculations of Sir Bedford.

A week had passed since my arrival at Hurstfield, and yet I was further than ever from a confession. One remarkable incident I must not fail to notice, which occurred during our excursion on horseback. Adela had invited me to examine the delicacy of the tracery on the walls of the ruined Saxon church, where our first interview had taken place; but she resolved to make no allusion to it. And now we again found ourselves within its walls. The church had been used as the burial-place of the Wyndham family. This circumstance gave a solemnity to our visit. I thought how destitute I was of all the memories which serve to hallow such spots, and involuntarily let fall an expression of regret for the whose destiny it is to wander through life bereft of the associations home and kindred.

"They are words which sound strange to my ear," said I, "familiar though they may be to all others."

"What a singular—I had almost said what a sad—condition!" rejoined Adela, in an accent of pity; "and yet I believe they are every thing to happiness."

"True. By such associations we are induced to live and hope. I never enter a churchyard without feeling the loss I have sustained from the want of that fostering care which a fond parent—a mother—could alone bestow."

"Oh, those who are early left in orphanage are indeed lonely," said Adela, with a look of sympathy which lit up a vision of momentary happiness.

Yes: those sympathetic words brought back my former gleam of hope amid the agony of disappointment and self-reproach.

The silence which ensued was embarrassing to us both; but we were relieved by the arrival of Fairfax and Constance, who, after dismounting, rushed, laughing, into the interior of the ruins, saying that an ugly old gipsy, in a scarlet cloak, was in full pursuit.

Could I believe my eyes? Again that sinister-looking, unfortunate woman stood before me, and grinned recognition. Without further parol or apology she came forward and took the hand of Adela in her own, and examined it carefully. I could have poured at that moment the contents of my purse into the lap of the harpy, so that she would consent to do nothing to dissipate the hopes I had begun to indulge once more. I was half inclined to resent her approach and bid her begone; but the gipsy was now disposed to be good-natured. She smiled and simpered, and drawing forth a small chain of gold from her pocket, proceeded thrice to encircle the wrist of Adela, saying, in a soft and kind voice,—

"There's a long journey before you, my dear, and a far journey, and a great grief, and the loss of a friend; but your heart is as pure as your cheek is fair, and you will live long and happily, and sleep quietly among the good old race."

The omen was not unfortunate. Adela thanked her, and bestowed

handsome recompence; while Constance, eager to learn her destiny, stretched forth her hand with a joyous smile, as if confident of a favourable response. The woman looked for a moment in her hand, then gazed earnestly in her face, shook her head, and muttered to herself,—

“Rare beauty and birth,
But too good for this earth!
A gentle maiden,
And a brief summer!”

Constance looked grave and puzzled, and turned with a disappointed air towards Fairfax, who interpreted the omen as good, and drawing forth half a sovereign, extended his hand, and requested the good offices of the mysterious visitor.

The gipsy courteously pocketed the money, and turning her eyes severely upon Fairfax, whose hand she thrust aside without deigning to make use of her palmistry in his case, she raised her forefinger significantly, and said,—

“Gold will not bring goodness, nor a fair countenance make a light conscience;” and with this speech she turned abruptly on her heel, glided out of the church, and left us all gazing at each other in mute wonder.

“Pshaw!” cried Fairfax, disdainfully; “who would for a moment trust in such harpies? I’ll be bound she is the guardian of that gang of imps who were convicted of hen-stealing before my uncle last summer.”

But the words and manner of the gipsy had made an unmistakable impression upon Fairfax,—and indeed upon us all. Adela protested that it was wrong to profane so hallowed a spot by seeking there to divine the secrets of the future, adding, thoughtfully,—

“How strange that she should speak of a long journey just after Sir Charles had decided that we were to go to Italy this autumn!”

“Yes. Let us talk of Italy,” said Fairfax, in an irritated tone, “and despise the nonsense of that vile woman.—Constance, can you possibly put faith in what she says?”

Constance offered no reply. She seemed ill and suffering. Her countenance had all at once grown deadly pale, and she trembled as if overcome by a sense of fear.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A PEREMPTORY SUMMONS.

I WAS roused next morning, after a restless slumber, by one of the servants who entered my apartment, bearing a letter, which, he said, had just been delivered by a special messenger from London, who had ridden all night in order that it might reach me at an early hour.

A glance at the handwriting showed me that the missive was from Sir Bedford, and in my irritation and disgust I threw it down as hastily as I had taken it up, determined not to vex my mind by a perusal of the contents, which I very naturally conjectured did not augur anything likely to administer consolation to me at that moment.

"The man below, sir, looks much distressed with his journey," said the attendant, waiting for a response. "He is agitated and careworn, and says he can't go away without accompanying you back to town."

"Accompany me back to town! What can the fellow mean?" said I, giving way to an angry impulse of passion. "If this should be D. Castro," thought I, "the sight of that face will condemn me for ever;" and taking up the letter I tore it open, and read as follows:—

"Your bankers, Messrs. V. and S., were seriously spoken of this afternoon. Hints of malversation have been thrown out, which I suspect are well founded. As they hold your securities, lose no time in instantly returning to town. Your continued absence may increase the difficulties which beset you; and I cannot hope to render you any assistance if you persist in keeping out of sight.

"BEDFORD RUSHTON."

"The tormentor!" I exclaimed, half aloud; "and the language he uses, too: 'My difficulties'—'keeping out of sight.' Those are courteous terms of friendship indeed!"

But a little reflection convinced me that possibly my adviser might be only acting disinterestedly in making this communication. I remembered, also, that on taking leave of Sir Bedford he had hinted the necessity of my not being far off in case any difficulty should arise; and perhaps on that account he spoke so slightly of my visit to Hurstfield. The insinuation which the last sentence conveyed was probably the result of the irritation he felt at my repudiation of that absolute sway which I had permitted him to exercise so long.

It was clear, also, that he would not have sent down a special messenger to Hurstfield unless the occasion had been urgent, and that there was no reason to suspect his sincerity in this advice, because it was couched in terms unusually pre-emptory.

My fears likewise contributed to moderate the asperity of my feelings towards Rushton. It was clear that I could not divest myself at that moment of the assistance of an adviser, whom I personally disliked as the chief author of my difficulties, inasmuch as I had no one experienced in business to whom I could appeal; no one, indeed, to whom I dared to make an avowal of the exact position in which I stood. To seek the counsel of Fairfax would only be to invite an assistance which might lead to greater embarrassments. I rose, therefore, with haste and agitation, and made preparations for my immediate departure from Hurstfield. I joined the party at breakfast as usual, and perhaps actuated by a con-

sciousness of the necessity of playing a resolute part, I succeeded in deceiving the minds of all present—except Fairfax, whose face wore a dubious smile—as to the real nature of the business that called me up to London. Sir Charles expressed a hope that when the affair was completed, I would again find my way back into the country. Constance complained that I was always abrupt in my departure—that I had gone away and left them suddenly at Hampton Severn; and the expression of Adela's face, while I was undergoing some interrogatories on the part of Sir Charles, wore a slight shade of disappointment, which increased to numberless sources of self-accusation that crowded upon my mind as she somewhat distantly pressed my hand at parting.

I found Sir Bedford, as I conjectured, at the office of the Apulxarras Mining Company. He grasped my hand, on meeting, with a cordiality which served to shake some of the suspicions which had been gradually accumulating in my mind. His manner was unusually agitated, and even his personal appearance seemed to have undergone a change since I last saw him. The expression of his eye was far from conveying that look of confidence and self-possession so peculiar to him.

Sir Bedford told me I had not a moment to lose, and hurried me off to the banking-house of Messrs. V. M. and S. A short conference ensued, and my securities deposited with them were restored without hesitation, though the heads of the firm expressed surprise at the extreme want of confidence we had manifested. Rushton, however, was remorseless, and deigned no explanation. Next day, as he had predicted, the fall of the old house of Messrs. V. M. and S. was bruited about the City, and men held up their hands in astonishment at the news.

"I have been doing all I could for you," said Sir Bedford, "regarding those confounded calls, and perhaps we shall be able to stave off the pressure of a week or so. If that can be done, we shall get something out of the fire. The most experienced men in the City confess their blindness and despair. They are utterly without confidence in each other; credit is crumbling on all sides. It is as if the financial world had awaked from a dream, and found their past condition of prosperity a hollow and deceptive figment of the brain. If the effect were confined only to the City," he added, "I should not feel so much anxiety; but the crisis has extended to the country districts. Even the Hampton Severn bank, from which I hoped the most favourable results, I feel will hardly weather the storm. It is not the loss of the shares which I took in the name of De Castro that I care for, but the loss of my reputation. It is infinitely worse where you have to plead your cause with ignorant men."

"Then Silverthorne, Hartopp, and Sir Harry Stanmore will be all borne down by this terrible state of things?"

"Every man of them. How can they hope to escape when better men are falling?"

"Should misfortune fall upon the head of old Silverthorne, I fear he will sink under the stroke."

"He must just take his chance like the rest of the world," said Rushton, doggedly. "Every man in these times must think first of himself. Charity should begin at home."

The tone of Rushton was needlessly harsh and unfeeling. He seemed even to indulge in a sort of self-complacency from the reflection that, if he were doomed to bear severe losses, and to see his prospects ruined, others were suffering equally with himself. It was a species of consolation which to me was an enigma.

The flight of De Castro had naturally been one of my chief sources of anxiety and alarm. I had made free use of him in the arrangement of my accounts; and as his knowledge of details was perfect in all that related to speculative investments, I had found that his assistance relieved me of a vast amount of labour. Since he had suddenly departed, everything was in confusion. I was unable to lay my hand on documents which at that moment might have been available for the purpose of sustaining my credit. Rushton protested that he had heard nothing of him; that he had gone off without appropriating any of the property of the company; that he could not hold out long; and, inasmuch as he had not a friend in the world but himself, he must return or starve.

For a moment I fancied that the escape of De Castro might be a deep-laid scheme, contrived to elude the claims which pressed upon the Apulzarras Mining Company, and that Rushton was in the secret; but upon reflection I could discern no possible motive for such a suspicion, and judged that De Castro, overcome by his fears, or intimidated by the overbearing language of Sir Bedford, had suddenly gone off in a fit of sullen resentment.

"You had better come down and talk over all these matters quietly at De Maintenon," said he. "We shall devote a day to the consideration of the best step to adopt under the circumstances. One thing you will have observed,—that men are no longer running about wildly; that a simple state of stagnation prevails. Now that, to my mind, is a good symptom. It will give the patient a little repose, and at least serve to break the fall of those houses which stand in the front rank. When the crisis is past, inasmuch as no exposure of their affairs has been made patent to the world, in all probability the leading firms, after passing over the razor edge of the abyss, like Mahomet's votary of paradise, will be ultimately saved. Like you, I have begun to feel a craving for repose. The feeling of suspense, strong as I am, is almost too much for me. I see it has worn you a little; but, remember, to despair is to confess yourself beaten."

I felt it was necessary to obey implicitly the injunctions of Rushton, who seemed the only man capable of imparting a ray of hope in the exigencies of the hour. However I might have disapproved the confessions

he sometimes freely gave way to, I could not help admiring the expression of courage and determination not to be struck down by the terrors which had prostrated the energies of weaker minds.

That evening was passed in my rooms examining books and papers, in the vain endeavour to reconcile the figures of De Castro with Rushton's opinion, that even under the worst of circumstances I should still succeed in showing a favourable balance. My future solvency turned, in fact, upon the single issue—whether "calls" were suspended or no. My funds were nearly exhausted, and it was impossible to realize anything at that moment, except upon the supposition of raising a loan upon a variety of securities which cautious men in the City pronounced to be absolute waste paper. For, as I have before observed, acting upon Rushton's principle of making a grand *coup*, the whole of my capital had been sunk in low-priced investments, which, had the tide of prosperity and confidence continued, would have elevated me suddenly to the position of a millionaire; but, in the event of an adverse state of things occurring, must have either reduced me to absolute necessity, or made me the possessor, at most, of a merely nominal property.

The examination of these accounts naturally excited my surprise at the enormous extent of the risk I had incurred. The bare contemplation of such temerity was enough to excite a fit of nervousness. The possession of the South American Bonds, for which Rushton had so striking a predilection, had been fortunately secured, by his timely advice and prompt action, from being locked up in the bankruptcy of Messrs. V. M. and S. at the time when every means of raising capital was required. These securities I resolved next day to place with my solicitor, who, I doubted not, would serve me as liberally as he had formerly done, in the event of a sudden emergency arising.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A NIGHT RENCONTRE WITH AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

THE full heat of summer had now set in, and for change of air I had taken quarters for a short period in the pleasant neighbourhood of Hampstead. I sought thus to escape, in some degree, the feverish sources of anxiety that beset me at every turn in London. I had been busily engaged during the evening with a confused pile of papers before me, and had prolonged to a late hour the uninviting task of endeavouring to satisfy myself as to my real position, but in vain. The more I sought to unravel the mazy labyrinth of figures, the more I became bewildered, and with a feeling of heat and agitation I arose and strolled out upon the heath to relieve, by a draught of refreshing air, the pressure which fevered my brain almost beyond endurance. I continued my moody walk for more

than an hour, unconscious of the time which was passing. The fresh breeze that fanned my cheek brought an instantaneous sense of relief to my fevered spirits; and the silence and solitude of the heath came gratefully after the distracting mental effort in which I had been for so many hours fruitlessly engaged.

As it was already past midnight, I became conscious of the necessity of returning, and bent my steps in the direction of the village. The night was sultry and obscure for the season, so that more than once I stumbled over the rugged ground, and wandered out of the direct path, until I found myself at length in one of the least frequented parts of the common. As I advanced under the shadow of some low trees, with the view retracing my steps, a figure, closely wrapped in a cloak, suddenly started out, hesitated for a few moments, and then quickly advanced upon me. I was so absorbed in my reflections, that I was completely unconscious of the proximity of the man until I found a hand laid violently on my throat, and a hoarse voice exclaimed, "Money! I must have bread—your money!"

It was the work of an instant to shake off the scoundrel, who was of low stature and slight frame, and apparently without any weapon to enforce his demand. I thought I had been attacked by one of the gang of convicts, or ticket-of-leave men, who, set free by some strange spirit of infatuation, were then wandering in full riot over the country.

He still clung to my person, crying in an agonized voice, "Bread! bread!" A close scuffle ensued, and my assailant being thrown to the ground, I dragged him forth by the collar from beneath the shadow of the trees into the light. In the effort my foot slipped, and I fell heavily across the emaciated body of the man. Our eyes met for an instant, and with a nervous horror I relinquished my grasp, as my name was feebly whispered by my adversary, who glared upon me with an expression of terror and amazement.

"What!" cried I, with a sense of horror on discovering the familiar face of the secretary, "is it possible, De Castro, you would attempt my life?"

"No, no; I am not an assassin!" wildly exclaimed the wretched man. "I seek not your life; but I am in want of food—of bread. For three whole days I have eaten nothing. I dare not ask relief from any one. I feared to show myself in public, and these pangs of hunger are like a consuming fire. Can you suppose that, had I recognized you, I should have dared thus to make such a demand?"

"Oh, I fancy not, indeed—a demand upon my throat," I exclaimed, relaxing my grasp. "Then all Sir Bedford has predicted of your career has been fulfilled. You *have* deceived him, and you starve!"

"It is false," cried De Castro. "I am innocent."

I was about to leave the spot in disgust, but the desperate man clung eagerly to me.

"You will not abandon me, Mr. Marston; you will not refuse my appeal for food. I have always acted faithfully towards you. If Sir Bedford accuses me of deceit, it is false. I am innocent of betraying any of his secrets. I have only been his tool, and now suffer for my fidelity to a cruel master!"

The utterance of De Castro was almost choked by his sobs; nor did he cease to retain his hold of me, still insisting on having the means of relieving the hunger which pressed upon him.

I was in doubt how to act on the moment,—whether to hand him over to the authorities, and have him prosecuted for the attempt, or to afford him the relief he asked. To the latter course I was inclined, not only by the piteous cries of the ex-secretary, but from the reflection that to seek to punish him legally would be to risk an exposure of my own affairs; as, in his defence, he would, in all likelihood, not hesitate to divulge the history of my connection with himself, and with Rushton his employer. A feeling of pity for the sufferings of the unfortunate man likewise inclined me to take a charitable view of his case. But before leaving him, however, I had curiosity enough to put a few questions as to the cause of his quarrel with Sir Bedford.

Strange to say, De Castro, notwithstanding that he admitted he had been brought to the point of starvation by an unjust suspicion, refused to divulge the causes of their difference.

"But be on your guard," said De Castro, in a deep voice of warning; "beware of that man. You have put too much confidence in him. If you cross Sir Bedford, you will find him vindictive to the last degree; and, what is more, he has been long weaving a plot to entrap you—one you little suspect."

"Weaving a plot to entrap me?" said I, with a feeling of mingled fear and curiosity. "Ah, he thinks to fool me out of my money, De Castro? Is that the aim of Sir Bedford?" I demanded, with a laugh of scorn and irritation at the insinuation of being made a tool of.

"No; he does not want your money. It is not that. He wants yourself," said De Castro, in a low whisper.

"Myself!" I repeated, with increased perplexity at the mysterious language of De Castro, fancying that the brain of the unfortunate wretch might be wandering from the sufferings he had endured, and that in the exaggeration of his terror at Sir Bedford's threats he had conceived him to be the incarnation of an evil spirit, capable of exercising a supernatural power over those he came in contact with.

"He wants myself?" I echoed, with a strange feeling of curiosity.

"Yes, yourself," repeated De Castro, with deliberation and apparent sincerity. "His object, believe me, has been to secure you, not your money."

"Oh, absurd," I said, turning away abruptly, "to continue to talk here with a wretch stricken down by want and the consciousness of

his depravity! Cease! I will hear no more," I added, moving away, and throwing down a handful of silver. "Whatever may be your faults, I shall not judge you, De Castro, in this place. Go and get food. You are mad. Remember, it is yet in my power to punish you.—Away!"

"Thanks! thanks!" exclaimed the secretary, eagerly clutching at the coin. "What I have said is true. Perchance you will find my warning verified one day, and discover that Sir Bedford has deeper designs than you suspect."

"Have I not told you to be silent?" I said, peremptorily, feeling at the same time a secret desire to question De Castro further as to what he knew of Sir Bedford's early history. "Get food, and refresh yourself. You are in no condition to talk, I tell you, and I will hear nothing further."

"But this money will only last me a few days," said De Castro, in an imploring voice,—“a week at most; and what am I then to do? I have no friends in England. The crisis has made every one who looks on me suspicious. I fear to encounter the eye of Sir Bedford. I wish to go abroad; but where am I to find the means?"

"What sum would it require to enable you to leave England?" I demanded, judging that, under all circumstances, it would be better if De Castro were out of the way, as I loathed the sight of the man.

"Oh, just sufficient to pay my passage to Boulogne," said De Castro, "and a few days' hotel expenses. Once with my foot on the Continent, I can shift for myself without fear or anxiety. My knowledge of the languages would be of use there. Besides, I could easily get engaged as courier to the family of some English gentleman."

"You would do wisely to keep clear of English gentlemen for the future," said I, contemptuously.

"This fellow is a veritable *enfant perdu*, and a reproach to me. The sooner he leaves England the better," I thought.

"If I gave you twenty pounds, De Castro, would you engage to leave without fail for the Continent to-morrow?"

"At once!" exclaimed De Castro, grasping my hand in token of gratitude. "Even a less sum would suffice. Believe me, I do not wish to extort money; I only wish to be away—to be out of England. You are my benefactor," he cried, in broken accents, as he picked up the money. "Believe me, Mr. Marston, I shall ever remember this last act of kindness and compassion."

"Speak no more of it!" said I, in a menacing tone. "Never dare to mention to any one the interview of this night, or the assistance you have received. You say you will remember it. Now I have given you the money on the sole condition that you will *forget* from this hour your past connection with me."

"Impossible!" said De Castro; "you have been so generous."

"I insist on your instant departure hence," said I, taking him forcibly by the arm.

"And you will not hear what I have to say further?"

"Not a syllable! I tell you to begone, and not to dog my steps. I will hear no more; and if you pursue me further, I will place you in the hands of those who will deal with you as you deserve."

"Well, be on your guard," muttered the secretary, in a disappointed tone. "I tell you an artful plot has been prepared to entrap you."

The threat had the desired effect, and De Castro, after repeating the expression of his gratitude in language that seemed to come from his heart, struck away and disappeared in the obscurity of the night.

With rapid steps and a beating heart I found my way back to the village, revolving in my mind this mysterious language, and asking myself whether the charge he had made against Rushton could have any real foundation, or was only the result of exaggerated terror, working upon a disordered understanding and a frame prostrated by severe suffering.

It was almost dawn when I reached my lodging. The cold air of the night had stiffened my limbs; and the intense excitement through which I had passed during the last twelve hours brought so immediate a sense of weariness and insensibility, that, with a feeling of utter prostration, I sank on my couch, and for the first time for many weeks I slept soundly.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A COOLNESS AMONG FRIENDS.

I WAS not slow in learning from the conversation of my friends the results of the great monetary crisis at Hampton Severn. Jack Gribbleton, who kept up a constant correspondence with the residents of the place, who regularly forwarded to him all the gossip, told me with ominous gestures and in a lisping voice that the Stoneleigh Down hunt was likely to be knocked up for ever; that Sir Harry, for a long time embarrassed by the expenses of the pack, had been induced to become a director in the new bank, with the view of restoring his broken fortunes, and carrying on the war. Silverthorne and Hartopp, as already observed, both of them men of good means, had been induced to join from different motives, and had embarked the savings of many years in the purchase of shares in the undertaking. The bank had succumbed under the pressure of the crisis, and the whole fortunes of both were legally liable for the debts of the establishment. Gribbleton related that upon the occurrence of this event, old Silverthorne had fallen into a state of gloomy despondency, and was wandering distracted about his farm; and Hartopp, almost beside himself with passion, had been beating daily with a large oaken stick at the closed doors of the bank, to the great consternation of the quiet folks of Hampton Severn.

I now felt convinced that I must be prepared to take my full share in the general disaster. Rushton was evidently carried away by a blind and overwhelming confidence in his own talents. It was painfully embarrassing for me to meet in the street my former colleagues of a board of the Apulxarras Mining Company; but we generally agreed to pass each other with abstracted looks and averted eyes, as if utterly unconscious that we had ever been mutually embarked in the perils of so speculative an undertaking. The noble lord, I fancied, carried his chin somewhat more elevated than usual. Mr. Fosdyke manifested to an extreme that peculiar bustling haste which characterized his movements. My two meek colleagues from Mincing Lane seemed to bear their misfortunes with even greater submission. My friend the Quaker passed by on the other side without exchanging a look or a word of condolence; while Mr. M'Phu seemed in the seventh heaven, and his countenance wore an air of abstraction and mystery which defied all penetration.

I had made up my mind for the worst, and I was determined not to be beaten down. My courage rose with the disaster, and I viewed my losses with a dogged and surly indifference. The agitation and anxiety which had so fearfully harassed me during the last few weeks now began to give way to a sense of stupor. The worst of the crisis was over, and the tide had begun to turn. Men in the City spoke with confidence of favourable change being at hand. My spirits rose with the prospect of better state of affairs, and day by day I felt relieved from the load which for a period of a month, had weighed me down almost beyond endurance.

Until I saw Rushton, it was impossible for me to say what was the real position in which I stood. I was prepared, however, to learn that my fortune had been irretrievably sunk in investments, the worthlessness of which being now completely exposed by the test of the crisis, had no the remotest chance of ever again becoming marketable. I had deferred my promised visit to De Maintenon, and Sir Bedford, contrary to his usual custom, remained a close prisoner in his country house. I conjectured that the commercial shock had at last begun to act upon him as it did upon others, and that he dreaded to show himself in the City. The warning of De Castro had not been forgotten, but I sought in vain to find any rational interpretation to the dark hints which he had thrown out. They were too mysterious and indefinite to produce any influence over my better judgment, and I concluded that in all probability he had become temporarily mad by the excess of his fears, and the aspect of a life of poverty which stared him in the face.

It might be that suggestions of prudence and foresight kept Rushton out of London until the storm had completely blown over. I could hardly suppose that a man of his strong constitution and impassive temperament, gifted with nerves of iron, and callous from the previous experience of many similar disasters, one who also had so frequently counselled boldness to myself, should now be shrinking behind the scenes as a coward.

afraid to face the light of day. I found it also impossible to entertain a suspicion of his dishonest dealing towards myself, or even to others. I simply blamed my own recklessness in yielding to his advice, and rushing into pursuits of a clandestine character, for which I possessed no experience, nor any personal qualification to insure success.

In the interim Fairfax continued to dream away his time at Hurstfield. From the tone of his correspondence it was not only evident he felt quite satisfied with the society in which he found himself, but no confession of regret, no allusion to his former friendship with Louise de Montfort, ever escaped him. One ominous circumstance, however, struck me in one of Fairfax's letters. He spoke of the state of his own health, and, for the first time in my experience, gave way to an expression of personal suffering. He complained of a serious difficulty of breathing, particularly when indulging in his excursions with Constance over the downs. And he confessed that on one occasion he had so overtaken himself by a severe gallop on an unruly steed, that Sir Charles persisted in selling the horse as a runaway, and had restricted the rides of his daughters to the limits of the park.

I at length made up my mind to go down to De Maintenon, for I was anxious to know what Sir Bedford would advise under the circumstances. It might turn out that I had exaggerated the perils of the position in which I stood; and possibly a brain so fertile in expedients might suggest some means of restoring the losses I had sustained.

I had learnt an important lesson—that acquired by hard experience; and I determined to profit by it, if the issue of events should ever put me in a condition to do so. To shake myself free from all connection with affairs in the City was my immediate intention, whatever might be the pecuniary sacrifice I might sustain; and with the remnant of my fortune to retire to some remote quarter of the country—to Wales, or Cornwall, or the Continent—for the remainder of my days.

Twelve months only had elapsed since I made my first memorable journey to De Maintenon, and now the ruinous old place was again before me. The scene was unchanged:—the same formal lines of poplars, the undulating landscape, still and lifeless, yet grateful after the din of London; the interminable shrubbery, the old-fashioned manor-house out of repair, the belfry over the stables, the deep shade of the funereal yew trees, and the high wall of the courtyard which shut out the prospect. Yes, all exactly the same as a year past. But how changed was I! What a strange series of events, pregnant with import to myself and to others, had since occurred! How different my fortunes! How many opportunities of quiet and substantial happiness had been thrown away for ever! Had I, then, gained nothing in the interval?—nothing? Not so; there had certainly been reaped something out of this short and fevered passage in my life:—*I was wiser by experience; in one year I had lived through the space of ten!*

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING.

IN these times of rapid travelling, when in a few hours one may be transported from the din, bustle, and impurity of town life to the bright verdure of the meadows which clothe the valleys of Switzerland, and in a few more hours among the very "palaces of nature" themselves—its mountains—it may be interesting and curious to know something of the ascent of one of the most beautiful, if not one of the most difficult, mountains of the Bernese chain.

About the middle of last July, and after several days of previous training, the writer, accompanied by two Oberland guides, left Lauterbrunnen for the ascent of the "Jungfrau." The selection of the starting place was left to the guide who had command of the expedition, and who preferred it to Grindelwald, the more favourite centre from which the mountains of the Oberland are explored. For the first nine hours the route lay along the Wengern Alp, and nothing very remarkable occurred not even a cloud or mist to interfere with the fine sharp outline of the surrounding mountains. We brought up, and set diligently to work: first, to boil some coffee with our spirit-lamp apparatus; and secondly to secure a soft place, sheltered from the sun's rays, to procure a couple of hours' rest. This accomplished, at 2.30 p.m. we are afoot again, ever now and then walking over some of our greatest garden ornaments,—violets, the red rhododendron, and anemones; soon, however, this rich carpet is to be exchanged for those dead and frozen fields of ice which prolong indefinitely the reign of winter, but which still play so important a part in the economy of nature, that without them the principal river that traverse the continent of Europe would be dried up; for the summer heat, which dries up all other sources of water, in melting the snows of the glacier furnishes a reservoir, the benefits of which to animal and vegetable life cannot be estimated.

As the day advances, patches of cumuli, without colour, encircle the mountain tops; and as they change, their graceful forms rising and falling in the distant air, at last to rest on the mountain-like fringe of the tenderest shade, I scarcely ever witnessed a more lovely sight, though hungry, thirsty, and fagged. A long line of smoke is seen by "Ulric," who is a few yards in advance. It comes from our home,—a solitary chalet, inhabited by a rough but honest peasant and his two daughters. Their comforts were few, but what they possessed was at our service. While the preliminaries for our evening meal were going forward, Ulric amused me by singing a national Swiss air; and as I lay stretched upon my wrapper on the withered sward, watching the delicate tints of violet light which fell like streamers on the mountains, from the rays of the sun's transparent crimson on the spotless snow, a chord within was touched

and I will not attempt to describe the extravagant joy that thrilled between my bosom and my brain.

The following morning, at half-past four o'clock, we left our lonely resting-place, laying all our plans for reaching the Faulberg ere night; but in this we suffered disappointment, and for this night, at least, our lodging was the cold ground. Many exciting and difficult circumstances fell to our lot; and, indeed, had not my second guide been provided with a ladder, there is every probability our expedition would have this day fallen to the ground. The past experience of my pioneer, who had traversed the road before in the capacity of a chamois hunter, did now stand out most boldly, and the daring soul within him seemed to peep out and animate us with courage. I confess the confidence which I placed in Ulric was more akin to that so firmly held by the Jacobites for their leader, and expressed in the chorus of the old ballad,—

“We'll gang where'er you do command,
And fight for royal Charlie.”

At mid-day we reached a halting point some distance above the enormous snow-field that surrounds the Col de la Jungfrau, to rest and survey the grandeur and sublimity around us. The Aletschhorn, the Mönch, the Eiger (or giant), and the Finsteraarhorn, with many others, are all in view; but amid the vast, unchanging glory of these everlasting mountains, the western heavens are telling us of the coming storm. The atmosphere is soon charged with gloom, and in a short time it reaches us in the form of hailstones. When its rage subsided, and almost in the tail of the storm, we started, with those stiffened muscles which rest after great exertion produces, and all three of us, tied together with a rope, pushed upward. During five hours of most desperate work, we cleared but little ground, from the slippery condition of everything on which we could obtain foothold, often depending as much on the grasp of our hands as on the latter. We were again brought up, and embarrassed in a fog; not before, however, we had gained a position where we could bivouac for the night; and to make matters more agreeable, Ulric assured me our quarters had been tenanted before by chamois hunters, forming a sort of watch-tower for them while pursuing their precarious calling. Its position—not of choice, but of necessity—appeared far from agreeable; still, to men fatigued by exertion and hunger, surrounded with almost darkness, rest and a little sleep were almost indispensable. So after a meal consisting of hard-boiled eggs and rather tasteless mutton, washed down with famous coffee, we prepared for slumber. To say the least, our lair was dry, and, protected by the overhanging rock, would remain so, provided the present wind would stand. With such reflections, mixed with fervent prayer for a bright to-morrow, I was soon in the arms of the drowsy god, locked in perhaps the sweetest sleep I had ever enjoyed, until aroused by Ulric, who was astir, and at my elbow immediately, to disengage me from the wrapper

in which I had been enveloped. We soon found "the vaulty heaven high above our heads" had discharged its wrath, and that we might expect fine weather.

At 4.30 a.m. we were *en route* for the summit. By this time the eastern horizon was streaked with fine, warm lines; the clouds were settling; and by eight o'clock the sun's rays were quite powerful, with scarcely a cloud to be seen. At 1 p.m. we reached the culme—the top of the Jungfrau, which was announced by our leader Ulric, in a peculiar wild, shrill note of ecstasy, taken up in a different strain by the harsh voice in the rear—the man of canton Unterwalden, and continued myself in as stout an old English hurrah as the muscles of my throat could produce at 13,720 feet above the level of the sea. The temperature was cold, and the wind, which from half a gale had now become half hurricane, rendered it impossible for us to remain long on the summit still, the panorama of the adjacent peaks, so near in appearance, so in reality; the snow, so pure and spotless; and the lakes of Lucerne, Brienz, and Thun, looking like little pools of water, made the view from the summit grand and striking. Might, majesty, and dominion here reappeared apparently unsullied by the hand of Time; or, if so, his touch is feeble. Where there is waste, there there is supply. As the avalanche is crumbled in pieces, and changing the form and mass, the snows and storms of winter are building and reproducing fresh material, until at last the mountain glacier river has run its course to the vast ocean, which again in its turn is taken up by evaporation, to perpetuate the law,—I may say, the circle just described.

As we are about to descend, we see that glorious optical effect produced when a pencil of rays from the sun are opposed to a cloud, and a spectator happens to be between them. The likeness of ourselves was first thrown on the cloud, which at this time had a serrated appearance; and as it thickened, each saucer of prismatic colour shone out with peculiar lustre and beauty.

We felt the descent as fatiguing, though we accomplished it quicker than the ascent. At 9.30 p.m. we reached the Faulberg a little below the snow line; and any man who, from the top of the "Jungfrau," has gained this point without exhibiting the liveliest gratification and delight, must surely have something in his nature little to be envied. If there is something pre-eminently imposing and dignified in the summit, there is a savage, but yet graceful, majesty in all the surrounding eminences at which you must scramble down;—sometimes it is among peaks, "towing in horrid nakedness;" or on ledges of rock, where the hands and feet are at work, and both alike educated for the necessary duty they have to perform; or across the glaciers' treacherous path, on little "pontons" bridges of snow; at one time among huge, nameless rocks of ice, of the most fantastic shapes imaginable; and at another it is the Alpenstock that rescues you from nearly perpendicular cliffs, with a deep gorge

valley below. Amid such danger, courage soon waxes strong, and the effect on both body and mind is most salutary.

Some may question how far it is desirable to be introduced where so much that is dangerous waits you; but the able-bodied pedestrian, who has secured good guides, and whose resolves are tempered with caution, has no more to fear than those who enter the hunting-field, or any other, almost, of our national sports.

From considerable experience in mountain climbing, I have found it well never to trust much to the resources of a sequestered place for "the wretched meats and drinks;" but I am happy to record an exception to the universality of this law, for our supper at the Faulberg bespoke the services of an accomplished cook; and with a few cups of that delicious and delicate commodity, tea (which I had brought from London), plus one bottle of red wine, our revels ended.

The next morning the descent is carried along moraine, which increases greatly and inversely our progress. On the enormous glacier we had left behind yesterday there was not much moraine—the *débris* of the mountain; but now it has become troublesome and dangerous as we approach the Aeggischorn, where we rest for the night, after, it may be, half a dozen awkward tumbles since we left the top.

The final journey to Grindelwald was made the next day, and the hour of 6 p.m. found me "at mine ease in mine inn."

I felt at parting with my faithful guides; and they, too, with downcast looks muttered out, "Farewell!" It was often strange to notice with what attachment they loved their mountains; how their eyes gained lustre, and their voices additional animation and vigour, when relating any chamois-hunting story. This love of fatherland is pretty wide spread among the men of the various cantons;—

"They love their mountains and enjoy their storms;
No false desires, no pride-created wants,
Disturb the peaceful current of their lives.
The tempest's fury and the torrent's roar
But bind them to their native mountains more."

At Grindelwald I am once more on the beaten road of Switzerland, strong in that perfect health which a tour of such a kind can alone impart, and able to listen with a more perfect ear to the teachings which natural scenery to its votaries yields.

SECRETS OF MY OFFICE

BY A BILL-BROKER.

PART IX.—ERNEST MOUNTJOY.

I HAVE mentioned in the last paper that my abrupt departure for Germany deprived the unfortunate bankrupt and suicide, Arnold, of assistance which, under the circumstances, I should have rendered. My motives for that abrupt departure will furnish a curious chapter of these Secrets.

The gentleman whom I introduce as Ernest Mountjoy was a frank, high-spirited, frolicsome, madcap young Irishman—very good-looking, and with his head full of nonsense about the wondrous superiority of Irish genius, Irish valour, and the rest of it. There needs no further description,—the species is well known; and it will be readily understood that his name *per se* at the foot, back, or across a bill, would not by any sane man be valued at the worth of sixpence. The first time Ernest Mountjoy called at the office he was accompanied by his mother, a ladylike person, of whom he was the only surviving child. She spoke English perfectly, but with a foreign accent, and I afterwards knew she was a native of Munich, Bavaria. She married an Irish soldier of fortune, Captain Patrick Mountjoy, who had entered the Bavarian service, and was wounded at Hohenlinden. More explicitly, Captain Patrick Mountjoy was a soldier of fortune at the time he accepted a commission in the Bavarian army. Some years after his marriage, he, by the death of a number of intervening relatives, succeeded to estates in the county of Longford, Ireland. I suppose the property was heavily encumbered. At all events, Ernest Mountjoy and his mother were absentees, living in not by any means first-rate style in London, when they called upon Lovegold and Co. to discount a bill for eight hundred pounds, at an awful date—nine months—drawn by Ernest Mountjoy upon a Mr. James Marie Balfé, who had an office in Coleman Street. The applicant was furnished with an introduction from Alexander Spence, an old, highly respectable customer; and James Marie Balfé was a good man in the City acceptance of the word “good.” We knew him only by reputation, as the manager for several peers—two very wealthy magnates,—for one City company—and of Irish estates. This Balfé was Irish by blood descent, but born in France,—hence the baptismal name of Marie given to a boy; and educated at Douai for the priesthood. The divine vocation did not harmonize with the young man’s instincts. He left the college—not with a high moral reputation—and, confident in himself, staked his future upon the lottery of London life. His first cast hooked a prize:—Mrs. Lowndes, a widow, not youthful nor beautiful, but the owner of a charming estate, with a rental of some seven or eight hundred per annum, in Longford. The reattached relict died in giving birth to a daughter, and lucky James Marie Balfé possessed the

estate, freed of all encumbrance. Thenceforth he prospered greatly, and at the time his acceptances were brought to us for discount by Ernest Mountjoy, was reputed a man of solid substance, if not of great wealth. He resided chiefly in Ireland, but his bills were made payable at Glyn and Co.'s, the then agents of the bank of Dublin. Young Mountjoy and Madame Mountjoy explained that the bill was accepted by Balfe, in anticipation of rents that would be payable before it arrived at maturity. This we knew to be a common mode of transacting such business between Irish landlords and the managers of their estates. The bill was discounted without hesitation; it, and several more subsequently discounted, were duly honoured; and at last we had acceptances of Balfe's to over five thousand pounds. This increase of obligations incurred by Balfe was accounted for by the devolvement upon Ernest Mountjoy of a large additional estate, consequent upon the death of an uncle. So we were assured by Ernest Mountjoy himself. Mr. Balfe was, even up to that time, not *personally* known to any person in our establishment. This account was about the most loosely regulated one in the books of Lovegold and Company. The chief reason for this was that I had accidentally become much interested in the Mountjoys. It needs not to exactly relate the how and the why. I was fortunate enough to rescue Madam Mountjoy from extreme peril, at not inconsiderable risk of my own life. There was no very extraordinary merit in the act, but it was talked about; the ladylike widow was very grateful, my self-esteem was flattered, and a sentiment regarding her, much warmer than ordinary friendship, though far from kindling to the fever-heat which welds folk together for better for worse, &c., arose in my mind.

In consequence, or partly in consequence, of that undefined, hardly self-acknowledged sentiment, bills, as I have said, to the alarming amount of over five thousand pounds were discounted for Ernest Mountjoy, in accordance with my general directions. Those bills all bore the acceptance of J. M. Balfe. I do not distinctly remember whether I was personally cognisant of the extent of accommodation afforded Ernest Mountjoy, till one day revealing lightning, deafening thunder, fell thereon; and the five thousand pounds odd, invested as believed in excellent securities, withered up in a moment to mere tinder rags. The lightning conductor, the thunder bearer, was James Marie Balfe in person. That gentleman made his first appearance at our office to inquire what was meant by a notarial message left at his office in Coleman Street the previous evening, to the effect that an acceptance of his for seven hundred and fifty pounds, drawn by Ernest Mountjoy, and made payable at Glyn and Co.'s, had been dishonoured. The clerk to whom he in the first instance addressed himself drily replied that the notarial notice meant exactly what it expressed, and that if the money, with charge for noting, &c., was not forthwith paid, the dishonoured bill would be handed over to our solicitor. Balfe thereupon declared that he had never accepted such a bill for Ernest Mountjoy, nor

any other in favour of that gentleman for the previous twelvemonth. In fact, Ernest Mountjoy was deeply in his debt—had long been so. Moreover, it was not his (Mr. Balfe's) usual mode of doing business, to give bills except for value received. Such an announcement brought the clerk with Balfe into the private room in a jiffy. I was greatly astounded. All the acceptances purporting to be his were placed before Balfe, who solemnly declared they were forgeries every one. The man's face was cadaverously pale as he made that assertion; there was a nervous quivering about his ashen lips; and his glance, instead of confronting mine, was averted, looking to the window, floor, ceiling,—anywhere away from me.

The man, I felt convinced, was lying. I, however, concealed my opinion under the mask of urbane astonishment, so to speak; and requested him to remain whilst I went to communicate with Mountjoy and bring him there, if necessary, in the custody of the police. He willingly agreed. I hurried off, called a cab, and drove to the Mountjoys. Both mother and son had left for Germany three days before, after a violent altercation with Mr. Balfe. The woman-servant, a confidential person, who answered the door and knew me very well, added that Mr. Mountjoy was mad with rage when Balfe left, and that it was with difficulty they could keep life in Madame. Three hours afterwards they set out for Germany, but left no address—so at least the woman told me. She understood that Mr. Balfe would soon follow them. The altercation, the servant added, in answer to my questioning, was about money, and paper of some kind, which could not be found. Up to the time of the quarrel Mr. Balfe and Madame and Mr. Mountjoy had been the best of friends and he, the agent or manager, had been for the last two or three weeks often at the house, and, if they chanced to be out when he called, would wait in one of the sitting-rooms for hours together, till one or the other returned. A strange story this. I had said I was going to seek Ernest Mountjoy; and Balfe, who knew he had left the kingdom, pretended he could wait at the office till I returned with the alleged culprit. I mentioned that circumstance, which Mrs. Dawes readily accounted for Balfe, for whom she had always felt a strong aversion without exactly knowing why, had called on the previous day, and in his usual wheedling way entreated her, in the interest of Madame and her son, not to drop a hint to any one that they had left the country. Mrs. Dawes promised him she would not, but knowing from her mistress' own lips that she intended writing to Mr. Lovegold by the first opportunity, "her only hope being in his friendship," Mrs. Dawes felt no hesitation in acquainting me with what had occurred.

This was a precious business. Feeling, however, that Balfe was trying on some devil's game with the Mountjoys, I resolved to act at once with rigour and decision. Mrs. Dawes willingly accompanied me to the solicitor, before whom we laid the case in its entirety. The managing clerk came into the room as we were speaking, and, hearing the name of

Balfe, asked if he was the man who had lately purchased large properties in the county of Longford, contiguous to an estate he had become possessed of through his deceased wife. I replied that he was; and the clerk went on to say that he had become acquainted with the matter by chancing to be in the office of the solicitor who was employed by the vendors; and that after Balfe, who called to say he should be able to complete the purchase as soon as the deeds were prepared, left, some remarks were made upon the wealth often accumulated by managers of Irish estates, whilst the titular owners were going at a gallop to the dogs. Mr. Balfe would be required to pay fifteen thousand pounds down in the course of a fortnight. The clerk did not know whether the properties purchased by Balfe were the Mountjoy estates. Mrs. Dawes was, however, clear upon that point. Ernest Mountjoy—wild, extravagant, even reckless as he might be—would never, she was sure, *sell* the land of his ancestors.

The clerk's information impressed me a good deal. Yet what, coolly looked at, was there in it? It did not touch the forgery or non-forgery of the acceptances; still—

"Might it be," hesitated the clerk—"might it be that the payment of the bills in question, all due, as I understand, within a very short period, would interfere with Mr. Balfe's land speculations?"

"That supposes a terribly desperate game," observed the solicitor. "Then the hurried flight of the Mountjoys after a violent altercation between Balfe and them is an ugly fact."

"An altercation," rejoined the clerk, "about acceptances, as we must suppose, not one of which was then due; and the existence of which, supposing Balfe had not accepted them, must have been unknown to him. I do not attach much importance," added the astute managing man, "to Madame Mountjoy's remark, 'that her only hope was in Mr. Lovegold's friendship.' That is susceptible of various interpretations."

It had been already decided to issue a *capias* against Balfe for the amount of the dishonoured bill; the clerk, however, in that respect at one with the solicitor, objected that it would be an ineffective proceeding; the commencement of a long, expensive litigation; which, if the evidence of Mr. and Madame Mountjoy could not be obtained in rebuttal of Balfe's denial of his signature, could have but one result. "Are you firmly convinced, Mr. Lovegold, in your own mind, that the acceptances you hold of Balfe's are genuine?"

"Spite of appearances, I am morally positive that they are."

"And you feel a strong friendship for Madame Mountjoy and her son; would incur certain pecuniary risk to serve them? You intimate assent? Well, then, my advice, with submission to your riper experience, sir, is to put the criminal law in motion directly your client hears from Madame Mountjoy, and is able to communicate with her."

"Put the criminal law in motion!" exclaimed the startled solicitor, who, though a sound lawyer, was not gifted with the vulpine shrewdness of his clerk. "Under what pretext, for Heaven's sake?"

"The pretext is plain enough. Balfe has connived at, possibly aided Ernest Mountjoy to leave the kingdom not many hours before a heavy acceptance drawn by Ernest Mountjoy, and signed by Balfe, would be due. Balfe then, Mountjoy being beyond legal reach, declares not only that acceptance, but others amounting to five thousand pounds, are forgeries. *Prima facie*, sir, here is evidence of a felonious conspiracy to defraud Messrs. Lovegold and Company. Now," continued the wily clerk, "supposing Mr. Lovegold is disposed to undergo the risk, the merely pecuniary risk, of giving Balfe into custody upon that charge, the officer who arrests him will have a right to search, not only his person, but his office, his desks, and bring away what papers he may find. That search—those papers—may tell strange tales."

This was an audacious suggestion, but I finally agreed to it, upon one condition; namely, that I should first see Madame Mountjoy, and satisfy myself that her son was being foully dealt with by Balfe. Of course we all knew perfectly well that *one* man cannot be successfully indicted for a felonious conspiracy, though he may be charged with that crime committed in association with another person not at the time in custody. Then, if his private papers should show he had really accepted the bills in question, and that he intended to defraud and ruin Ernest Mountjoy, every purpose would be answered. Meanwhile James Marie Balfe was to be arrested on mesne process for the amount of the overdue bill. This was done the same day. He gave bail to the sheriff, and was of course liberated. Before the time arrived when he would have to file special bail (this occurrence took place a few months before arrest on mesne process, except under peculiar circumstances, was abolished)—before, I say, the time arrived when Balfe, who treated my proceedings with derision, would be required to put in special bail, I received the expected letter from Madame Mountjoy. It was dated Frankfort, and implored me, if I would save herself and son from destruction, and avoid the immense loss which would else fall upon the firm of Lovegold and Company, to hasten to her. She dared not leave her son for an hour, and he dared not trust himself within the four seas. I set off a few hours after receiving her letter.

I found the mother and son in a state of distraction. Their story was soon told. Several of the bills had, Madam Mountjoy understood, been sent by post from Ireland to Ernest Mountjoy; the accompanying letters, dealing with various business matters, her son said, being unmistakably in Balfe's handwriting. Early on the day when they, utterly panic-stricken, left England in such haste, Balfe had called, as was his frequent wont when in London; spoke of the rents he had received, the large sums still due; and expressed a confident hope that he should soon be able to remit a large sum. Ernest Mountjoy said he thought it was high time he did, since—except the bills he had discounted, amounting to somewhere about five thousand pounds, the proceeds of which had all gone to pay back debts and obligations of honour—he had only received a few

hundred pounds during the last eighteen months; whilst the estates together were estimated to yield a rental of between seven and eight thousand pounds a year. He and his mother intended to no longer delay going over to Ireland, and looking into the business themselves. In reply, Balfe inquired whose bills to the amount of five thousand pounds they had discounted. The question astonished them. Why, his;—whose else? He flatly denied that he had given Ernest Mountjoy an acceptance during very many months. "It is true," said he, "that I was asked by letter to allow you to draw upon me for several large sums, amounting in all to about two thousand pounds, which request I respectfully declined."

"Which you respectfully declined?" shouted the son, with extreme astonishment, but to his mother's dismay, with alarm, terror;—signs, she imagined with trembling horror, of guiltiness.

"Which request I respectfully declined," repeated Balfe. "Bills to the amount of five thousand pounds indeed! A likely story! The few hundreds in cash you speak of amounted to more than twelve hundred."

"You cannot be such an infernal villain, Balfe! No, no, it is impossible. It is a horrible jest. Have we not several letters of yours enclosing some of the bills? and—and," stammered the much terrified young man, confounded by the iron inflexibility of Balfe's countenance, "did you not authorize me to accept bills for you; that is, to write your name upon them, to the amount in all, if I were suddenly pressed, of about three thousand pounds, the sole condition being that I should immediately advise you by post of what I had done? which condition I rigorously fulfilled. You received these notices," added Ernest Mountjoy; "not one of the letters was returned to me."

"Either I must be dreaming, or you are mad," retorted Balfe. "I authorize any one to write—that is to say, *forg*e—my name to bills for thousands! That bangs Bannagher."

Ernest Mountjoy, who had long felt a secret fear that he had fatally committed himself by signing, *imitating* Balfe's signature, with his unproveable though positive consent—invitation—fell fainting on the floor with a cry of despair at hearing that terrible confirmation of his secret dread. To finish briefly with this part of the story, no letter of Balfe's enclosing bills could be found. The man affected to feel deeply for both mother and son, but declared his utter inability to take up the bills at maturity, and that it would be impossible he could acknowledge them. He then urged immediate flight till the matter could be arranged. It would not be very long before he should be in receipt of considerable sums as Mr. Mountjoy's agent; and he once out of the way, a settlement might be easily made. He could advance on the instant two hundred pounds, which he did; and bewildered, panic-stricken, the mother and son accepted and acted upon the scoundrel's treacherous advice.

This version of the affair perplexed and grieved me. That Balfe had given the heedless young Irishman leave to accept bills in his name was,

I had little doubt, quite true; but to prove that such leave was given seemed impossible. I had few words of hope or comfort to offer; and bidding mother and son a lugubrious "Good night," returned to the hotel at which I had put up, to sleep upon the matter, as the reader knows was my habit when dubious and perplexed.

Night upon that occasion brought no enlightening counsel. The morning's post did; though the illumination was but a glimmer, faint flickering in the thick darkness. Mr. Balfe had, through his attorney, made a conditional offer to Lovegold and Company to compound for the recited acceptances, at the rate of five shillings in the pound down. This proposition was made "without prejudice," &c., &c. Mr. Mountjoy received a missive by the same post, from the same lawyer, also "without prejudice," which in substance amounted to this,—that if he, Ernest Mountjoy, and Madame Mountjoy, would execute before a Frankfort notary a formal deed, the draft of which was sent, acknowledging that, in consideration of Mr. Balfe taking up the bills in Lovegold and Co.'s hands, and saving Mr. Mountjoy from any further annoyance in the matter, all or any claim which Mr. and Madam Mountjoy might otherwise have upon Mr. Balfe, for rents or other moneys received by, or which should be received by him during the next six months, would, by the taking up of those acceptances, upon one of which Mr. Balfe had been arrested and held to bail, be held to be validly settled, paid, discharged. This was certainly cool; especially as Madame Mountjoy and her son seemed positive that, at the expiration of the six months stipulated for, fifty ten thousand pounds, inclusive of the five thousand accepted for, would be due in rents on the Irish estates. I, moreover, had no mind at all to be done out of nearly four thousand pounds; and counselled war to the knife. At the same time, I remarked it would be prudent to temporize—write to Mr. Balfe's lawyer immediately for more detailed explanation further particulars, &c., &c. The next day I set off for England, in some degree hopeful, comforted.

Our solicitor and his clever clerk listened with hair-weighing attentiveness to what I had to tell them; pondered gravely and slowly the two letters written by Balfe's lawyer; finally arriving at the agreeable conclusion that the manager and his adviser had made a mess of it. The bargain sought to be entered into, if carried out, would be vitiated by fraud, Balfe being the servant of the Mountjoys,—supposing that the moneys in actual and prospective possession of Balfe should amount more than the sums he would have actually disbursed in taking up the bills. A court of equity would order a regular account, and compel Balfe to pay whatever balance might be found due. So far good; but there was a terrible difficulty to be got over, a tremendous obstacle to be overleaped or set aside,—those bills which Mountjoy admitted to have accepted in Balfe's name without proveable authority. There was the rub. The clerk firmly adhered to his opinion as to the advisability of charging Balfe

with felonious conspiracy. I agreed. An officer was sent for—told his services would most likely be required, but that he must take his cue from us, that is from the clerk, who undertook the sole management of the affair; except that, should it be necessary, I, not he, should give Balfe into custody.

We found Balfe in his office, and sternly requested a private interview. Recognizing the officer by whom we were accompanied, he turned as cadaverously pale as when he first informed me that the seven hundred and fifty pounds acceptance was a forgery, and asked, falteringly, the meaning of our visit. "You will know presently," said the clerk. "We must speak privately with you. The officer will remain within call. His services may not be required."

Balfe led the way to an inner office, begging us to be seated, adding that perhaps we would excuse him for a few minutes, as he had some letters to send off immediately. "Not for one half-minute—not for one moment, Mr. Balfe. It is in order to obtain the privilege of reading your letters, ferreting out your papers, that we are here to charge you with a felonious conspiracy to defraud this gentleman."

"Felonious conspiracy! What—how—with whom?"

"Of feloniously conspiring with a person not yet in custody, Ernest Mountjoy, to falsely represent certain bills, bearing your signature, to be forgeries, and thereby to evade your liability."

"Sir, they *are* forgeries."

"We don't believe your assertion, sir. Besides that, we have two letters from your attorney—these are copies,—offering, in consideration of pocketing a large amount of plunder, as we shall be able to prove, to compromise the felony, if one has been committed. You are on the horns of a dilemma, Mr. Balfe. It is like Bluebeard's key. If you rub out the evidence of felonious guilt on one side, it turns up on the other. To sum up, sir, unless you acknowledge that you are legally liable for the bills in question, which we have no doubt is the truth, this gentleman, Mr. Lovegold, will give you instantly into the custody of the officer outside, on a charge of felony. Your books, letters, or other papers, will, we feel confident, prove your legal liability. If that be so, you will only have told an abominable lie, and missed a great grab. What do you say? We can't wait. I give you just five minutes to decide," added the imperturbable man of business, taking out his watch,—“just five minutes; not one second more.”

Never was man more completely flabbergasted than Balfe. Rage, terror, mystification, appeared to possess him by turns. Terror conquered; but not till the five minutes had elapsed, and his adversary had risen to call in the officer.

"What, in the devil's name, do you require of me?"

"The formal admission that, when you denied the genuineness of your signature to the bills in Messrs. Lovegold's possession, you uttered an

atrocious falsehood. Secondly, a cheque for the whole amount of bills. The moneys intended for the purchase of the Longford estate I know, still in your own possession. You are a prospering man," tinued the clerk, "and, if you do not again venture upon these shores to wealth, may yet die very rich. Then you are at this moment trusted agent of peers and London companies. Do you think would continue that confidence after such an exposure as, if you are wise, will take place at the Mansion House to-morrow? Come, the is lost, boldly as you have played. Nothing remains but to give up stakes."

In less than an hour afterwards the business was effectually set Lovegold and Company had their money; the bills were destroyed, accepting, in consideration of that being done, our acknowledgment he had paid us five thousand pounds odd on account of, and as coll for, Madam and Ernest Mountjoy.

DOWN IN YACHTLAND

BY CAPTAIN DRAYSON, R.A.

AND—where is it, when England is a land of yachts, and English-her yachting men or lovers of yachting? Without, however, making idious distinction, we may claim for the Isle of Wight and its the sobriquet of Yachtland, for it is in that neighbourhood that bound. This arises from the fact that the locality is one well for marine pursuits. There are many and safe harbours, towns ges of considerable importance in the vicinity, and scenery of a ion which is scarcely to be rivalled by any in England.

is there that has been fortunate enough to gaze from the deck of upon the bold, effective cliffs that overhang Ventnor, and has realize the beauty of this view? Or who has rambled down the ' Ventnor, and failed to be inspired by its grandeur and sublimity? fresh from a visit to these regions, and we write whilst the influ-the spirit of the places is upon us; for we were greatly impressed e beauty of the regions we visited. Although some of the most ed localities in Europe, Africa, and America had previously met e, yet the conditions under which we saw some of the localities in nd were such as to render our visit ever-memorable.

thampton, Ryde, Cowes, Lymington, Southsea, or Gosport, make ed head-quarters for yachting men. Each of these localities has ecial qualities to recommend it. In some there is quietness, in gaiety, whilst many attractions are possessed by special vicinities.

own part, we have a favourite from amongst those named; but of d our reasons we will say no more at present. Let us, instead, : some of our visits to the various portions of Yachtland, and men-se facts which were to us matters of interest.

us suppose—as it was—that the weather, that powerful agent in ion with pleasure parties, was propitious; and we leave Southampton ly in the morning, having judiciously selected for ourselves and position on board the steamer which enabled us to see as much as , and at the same time to be protected from the sun's rays without of a parasol or umbrella.

und us, as we start, we perceive the graceful hulls of several yachts reposing at their moorings, the clean-looking crews lounging list-on the bulwarks, or occasionally performing some polishing work, apparently is undertaken more as a labour of conscience than as necessity; a sort of deed, in fact, prompted by a feeling of indo- ' Yachting, even to common sailors, is not very hard work.

: fore-and-aft schooner rig seems to be that most generally in and, as far as appearance is concerned, this arrangement certainly o be that most pleasing to the eye,—the break formed in the general

outline by square rigs spoiling, to a certain extent, the graceful swell of the large canvas stretched fore and aft.

A gay-looking cutter-yacht now and then was passed, as we steamed down the Southampton Water; whilst heavy colliers, lumbering fishing boats, and other craft of a *canaille* character, were mingled with the most aristocratic-looking yacht. In fact, if any person were ignorant of yachting, or even seafaring statistics, he might easily distinguish a yacht from a mere vessel of business, were he to observe which of the floating fabrics around him seemed most like a well-dressed lady or gentleman, and which was a fair representation of a person not dignified by either of these cognomens; for a yacht, whether it be masculine or feminine, belongs in external appearance to the *élite* of vessels.

Past the grand but now desecrated ruins of Netley Abbey our steamer carries us, and we are before the wide-spread hospital of Netley, a building certainly imposing in appearance, and important in its uses; for nearly three thousand patients can be accommodated therein, and the air is such as to suit any invalid, to whom fresh air and a cheerful view are desirable adjuncts to other restoratives.

But we have hitherto neglected that other portion of our identity, which enables us to speak of us, not in our editorial, but in our numerical capacity. There was a real *we* and a real *us*; and may we trust that pardon will be accorded to us if we say a few words about these *we's*.

We must own to being strongly influenced by that portion of our nature which characterizes us as gregarious. We love the society of our fellow-creatures, provided society is not crowded upon us, or we upon society; more particularly do we love it when we purpose visiting scenes amidst which we are likely to see those things which are of general interest. Thus companions on an excursion add greatly to our pleasure at the time; and hereafter we may, as we refer to our adventures, again fight our battles o'er. In our own case, we were more than fortunate in our companions. We had with us not "two nymphs adorned with every grace," but two ladies fresh from a country vicarage, whose experiences had not yet gone so far as steamers, and to whom, therefore, nearly all that we saw was novel as well as interesting; but, besides this, there was about our companions a genial warmth and a simplicity which would render them dear to all as companions for ever as well as for a day. We might write pages on this one subject of our experience, but we will confine our pen to matters of more general interest, and merely add, that a brother worthy of the sisters formed the fourth person of the *we* about whose experiences we are writing.

Onward glides our industrious boat, and carries us past Calshot Castle, and into the vicinity of a buoy, on which we perceive, in white letters, the somewhat vague intimation, *Spit*. As though to convey forcibly to our imagination an idea which was before in embryo, a Yankee steamer passes *in line with the said buoy*, and temporarily eclipses it.

From a careful observation of the surrounding scenery, we are now enabled to devote a few moments to the examination of our fellow-passengers; and what a fine field is there before us! He is but a dull plodder who tells us that it is necessary to gauge and press the bumps on our neighbour's head, in order to discover his character or peculiar bias. Who amongst us, although ignorant of phrenology, physiognomy, and all the other "onomies," yet fails to perceive the type of mind with which he is temporarily brought into contact, if he but employ common observation? A few words spoken, the wave of a hand, the mere manner, will often unfold that peculiarity which is the most prominent, and which serves to individualize a character.

Beside us sits a pensive-looking young lady, book in hand, and pale in face. She is deeply occupied with a poem, and it is evident feels all she reads. She has been crossed in love, and has not yet thrown off the heart-sickening effects. Beside her is a sharp, angular dame of doubtful age, reading "The Sinner's Punishment; or, the Frying of the Sceptic," which it is evident she highly approves of. Were Hades commanded or ruled by our angular fellow-voyager, it would indeed be a locality of torture. At a short distance, again, is a self-satisfied, middle-aged lady, of a romantic and sketchy tendency, who, with F pencil and gloved hand, rapidly scrawls a few ill-toned lines, which are supposed to represent yachts, hills, waves, and boats. Very busy is this amateur artist, and very well pleased with herself and all she does; but we doubt the value of her performances, and we love not the ostentatious display which is thus prominently put forward. We would rather pass one hour in conversing with our interesting friend on the right—pale, subdued, and pensive though she be—than hear the life's experience of the dame whose fussy hand has damaged paper before our very eyes.

Stand by!

And we find ourselves nearing the village of Cowes, and gliding amidst some scores of beautiful models, which, like graceful birds, repose upon the calm sea. Cowes from the sea looks rather pretty. On the west there is a fine stretch of green, on which some gay-looking, butterfly figures are reposing or promenading. The castle, looking very like a mere private house, is at once a prominent object, but all its beauties cannot be seen from the distance. When landed in this village there seems less to recommend it. The streets, although clean, are very narrow; whilst the houses are mean, and not too well provided. There seems a cream of wealth in Cowes, floating over a substratum of blue watery poverty, and the two do not amalgamate.

Fortunately, there is an easy escape from Cowes in the shape of a railway, which in a very few minutes enables a person to reach Newport, the capital of the island, and from which conveyances may be obtained, which will enable all the interesting and surrounding portions to be seen.

The quick and watchful eyes of the expectant cabman did not allow

four strangers to depart with impunity from the railway station at Newport. "Carriage to any part, sir," was repeated freely; and at length suggestions were offered that Freshwater, Ventnor, Ryde, Shanklin, &c., were all points of attraction, whilst good refreshment, and cheap, was to be procured at several other localities. Having previously arranged the direction in which our route would lay, we started in a waggonette for Ventnor, having for our driver a communicative old soldier, who, in a rather disjointed manner, jerked out certain local information, as we passed various places of interest. "That 'ere 'ouse 'ad three 'undred and sixty-five winders afore it was altered, and now it has three hundred and sixty-nine," a fact which, he assured us, would enable a person, if so disposed, to look out of a different window every day of the year. This piece of numerical information was more easily understood than was the next, which was volunteered by a female who kept a turnpike, and who assured us that she had a different-coloured ticket for every day in the year, in order to prevent imposition. Even with the aid of the hidden treasures of coal tar, as regards productions of colours, we were puzzled to make out three hundred and sixty-five varieties.

Although we were driven many miles, and turned and twisted in all directions, there always on our right hand was a hill, on the summit of which was a column or obelisk. This obelisk actually haunted us; it was ever present, and seemed to hover over us like a vulture over a wounded animal. It was only when the wide-stretching waters of the Channel appeared before us that we found the pillar had at length disappeared from our view.

Ventnor is indeed a lovely place. The scenery is bold, and rich in foliage. There is a sort of tropical feeling in the atmosphere, which, on the day we visited the locality, was warm and pleasant. The bathing-place had, however, a fault; for, from the elevated position from which we saw the water, we could perceive the points of two or three rocks at a very short distance from the shore. Now, our idea of a good bathing-place is, that the beach should descend rapidly, and there should then be clear, open, deep water before us.

We cannot speak too highly of the cleanliness, neatness, attention, and goodness of the fare at the "Crab and Lobster" Hotel, Ventnor. When any crabbed individual finds the charges at an hotel excessive, it is not unusual to find that he allows his spleen to escape in the shape of a letter to the *Times*. When, then, we find all that can be desired at an hotel, it is only just that we should make known these by no means common qualities. Another recommendation at the said house was the attendance. There are few things more repulsive than to be waited upon by a greasy, dirty man, whose soiled garments and doubtful linen are sufficient to mar many appetites. Two damsels, passing fair, and neat as muslin could make them, almost caused one to apologize when requesting another bottle of ale.

From Ventnor to Shanklin is a beautiful drive, but a more beautiful walk; whilst the Chine at the latter place must be seen to be appreciated. There are many places of interest between Shanklin and Ryde; but the tourist's guide will give full details of these, as well as of the picturesque spots to be seen near Ryde, many of which are well worth a visit.

A walk down Ryde pier induced us to conclude that either the residents or the visitors, whoever they might be, who were there promenading, were labouring under a mistaken idea. Undoubtedly we go to the seaside for a thorough change; this change ought, in order to be beneficial, to be entire. Even though we lose sight of the familiar faces of the "Row" or drive, so much the better. It has been very truly remarked by our great dramatist, that "the apparel oft proclaims the man;" and we remarked at Ryde, that the entire "get-up" of both sexes was almost exactly what it would have been had they visited the park in June. Weak-minded men were in almost every instance surmounted by chimney-pot hats, whilst neckties and coats were anything but marine. Ladies were attired in bonnets and rustling silks, instead of in comfortable hats and uniform dresses of less pretentious appearance, and were evidently over-dressed. There seems to be too much display in Ryde to make it really enjoyable as a watering-place; at least in that part of it near the pier.

Again we are on the water, and bound to Portsmouth from Southampton. On leaving Cowes, we were shortly opposite Osborne; and now intense excitement seizes on many of the ladies, for there, down by the beach, is a carriage and pair, and it is possible that royalty is wandering near. Opera glasses are arranged to suit the exact focus, and the eyes are seriously tried; but with no satisfactory result, until one quick-sighted observer perceives a white handkerchief waving from the bathing-machine anchored off Osborne. Soon, from the small yacht near, four sailors spring into a boat, row quickly to the machine, and embark some human beings; but, alas for the curiosity of the passengers! our boat makes such rapid progress, that a prince is almost undistinguishable from a princess when we obtain a view of the boat as it leaves the bathing-machine.

It is really an interesting inquiry to make, why everybody is so anxious to see a prince or princess. If we for a moment calmly reflect upon the question, we shall be puzzled to discover whether it is from interest in them individually, from mere curiosity, or because we feel ourselves to be less wise than our neighbours if we have to own that we have never seen the prince or princess. It is by no means unusual to hear the following conversation,—

"Have you seen the Princess?"

"No."

"Then you should see her."

"Why?"

"Because everybody sees her! But what a silly question, to ask *why* you should see her. Of course you ought to see her."

In the present days of photographs we can calmly examine every feature of that handsome face without leaving our arm-chair ; and having a great dislike to being jostled by a crowd, we seriously ask, why people endure so much merely for a passing glance ? Besides, every one smiles, seems happy, and looks pleased, when they tell us that they saw the Prince and Princess, after standing in the sun, surrounded by a crowd, for four hours.

Leaving Osborne, we are again at Ryde pier, the costume of the visitors at this place appearing as out of character as before. A short half-hour's run carries us past Fort Monckton and Block House Fort, and enables us to disembark at Southsea pier. It is some years since we visited Southsea ; but it is not materially altered. Slight improvements have taken place ; memorials have been erected on the beach, and offensive statues removed. Two gross caricatures, of Horatio Thomas Nelson and Arthur, Duke of Wellington, have retired into the oblivion from which they never ought to have emerged. These once stood on Southsea Common, the name of the caster or sculptor appearing in letters double the size of those indicating the names of the individuals thus victimized. We were reminded of the subaltern's practical joke, who, enraged at these productions, transferred the description on the two statues, and thus Horatio Thomas appeared with a prominent eagle nose, and Arthur, the Duke, with the loss of an arm, a fact carefully pointed out by the excursionist to his wife and family, who visited the locality before the trick had been discovered.

Great has been the change in naval architecture since the old *Victory* bore the flag of Nelson. Visitors are numerous to this ship, and the sailors or warrant officers well up in their duty of showmen. "Here Nelson fell," and "Here Nelson died," are sentences uttered in a proper and imposing manner ; whilst "England expects every man to do his duty" is painted round the wheel, and needs no reminder to inform us from whence the moral emanated.

It was not, however, on the day of the great naval battle that this sentence was universally as much appreciated as it is at the present time. More than once have we listened to our dear old friend's account, as he stated his own experience in connection therewith.

"I was quite a youngster then," he would say ; "only three years in the service, and was on the quarter-deck when the signal was hoisted in the admiral's ship. 'Here, Mr. S.,' said the captain, 'go below, and assemble the men aft on each deck, and tell them what the admiral's signal is.' I went below, and there found the greater number of the men stripped to the waist, with a black handkerchief bound round their heads and over their ears, in order to prevent the report of the guns from deafening them. We were only going about three or four knots an hour, and the men were, some dancing a sort of jig, others looking anxiously out of the ports to see how we were going on ; but upon my giving a signal, there

was a general cry of, 'Avast, there! come aft, and hear what the admiral says.' When the men assembled, I, with all due importance, told them that the admiral's signal was, that '*England expects every man to do his duty.*'"

Instead of being received with that enthusiasm and reverence which poets and romancers love to represent, the message seemed to produce a considerable amount of grumbling, or at least complaint, such remarks as the following being distinctly audible,—

"Do our duty! Why shouldn't we do our duty? B—— it all, I've always done my duty, and will agen. Let us just get alongside the Crappos, and see how we'll do our duty. Do our duty! Why, does he think we won't?"

These and other similar remarks showed that with Jack the practical view of matters was more prominent than either the poetic or the suggestive.

From the *Victory* we saw another fine vessel, on board of which we made our way, and we had then an opportunity of comparing a modern with an ancient line-of-battle ship. After examining the various points of interest, to which our attention was called by a remarkably civil and intelligent guide, we observed an individual stalking backwards and forwards on the quarter-deck. With bated breath and an entire change of manner, our guide whispered to us, "That is the captain."

Poor ignorant landsmen, who indifferently rub shoulders with mighty men of the ocean when they are met on shore, ye little know what sacrilege you commit. The captain of a line-of-battle ship is a deity in his particular sphere; and well did this fact appear known to the person at whom we were graciously permitted to peep. But we had seen enough, and were preparing to depart, when some junior officer, with politeness, but some slight eagerness, said,—

"Please to stand on one side of the gangway, for the captain is going on shore."

Having explained, however, that our boat was alongside and ready, we were allowed to embark; and therefore scrambled down the side, and into the wherry. Then, however, we requested the waterman to wait, in order to see how our majestic friend, *the* captain, descended and condescended to his boat.

First came four or five boys with long pieces of green-looking rope, which they fastened to the lower part of the ladder, and then held out sideways, as though for the purpose of aiding the descent of some very feeble old lady. The boat and its crew were alongside, and the men standing up, looking very expectant. Matters remained in this manner for nearly a minute, when a somewhat juvenile officer made his appearance on the top of the ladder, and after examining the preparations with a critical eye, pointed out some slight defects, which were ordered to be corrected. He then announced that the captain was coming, and suddenly

disappeared. Almost immediately after, another officer, somewhat senior in appearance, came and looked down the ladder, and spoke to one of the men, whose attitude or position did not meet his approval. He then told them to be all ready, for "the *captain* is coming." Another official, whose wrists were adorned with rings, and whose action and manner were buds of that majesty of mien which we had observed in its full-blown state on the quarter-deck, now stood in the gangway, and with a frowning brow pointed out to the small boys that something was incorrect in the manner of holding the ropes. "Keep that boat closer in," was now shouted, "and be ready, for the captain is coming." Yet another visit; for an officer, who we had observed had persisted in carrying under his arm a long telescope, even between decks, as though he wanted to examine the faces of his men at a minutely short distance, now mounts on the gangway, and surveys the preparations below; after which he says, as though announcing something quite novel, "Now, are you all ready for the captain?"

Alas! the tide was carrying us away, and we could not stay near enough to see the mighty man enter his boat: we had, however, seen enough to enable us to account for that absurd pomposity of manner, which we had occasionally seen as the attendant of an ill-balanced mind, possessed by a member of one of the noblest of professions.

A strange medley was presented to us as we walked, or rather pushed our way, along the lower deck of the *Himalaya*, on board of which an entire regiment had just embarked, for the purpose of being conveyed to India. Many a heart on board that vessel must have been sad and weary, for who amongst us can quit any land in which we have long resided, without leaving behind much that is beloved by us? and to be compelled to leave whilst hope is still before us is indeed sad.

Portsmouth and Portsea are dirty, business-looking places. There is but little in the towns themselves attractive to a visitor, and we were glad to leave them for the beach at Southsea. We could not but compare unfavourably the doubtful fare, the greasy-looking waiter, and other parts of the lunch, at the hotel at which we passed an hour, with the accommodation offered us at Ventnor. The latter so clean, fresh, and attractive; the former doubtful, even in cleanliness.

We must omit, from want of space, a short description of the various matters of interest that we saw in Portsmouth dockyard and in other places in the neighbourhood, for a limit is placed upon our literary space. Let us but add, that a fortnight may be well and happily passed down in Yachtland, where much is to be seen, where every variety of scenery can be obtained within a few miles, where smiling faces and warm hearts will tend to increase the geniality of the scenes, and from which we part with deep regret, but most pleasant remembrances.

ROYAL FAVOURITES.

PART VIII.

FAVOURITES OF LOUIS XIII.: DE LUYNES—CINQ-MARS—MADAME
D'HAUTEFORT—MADEMOISELLE DE LA FAYETTE.

THE bold and startling *coup-d'état* which, by the destruction of the Italian favourites of Marie de' Medici, emancipated the youthful Louis the Just from their thralldom, only threw him, when he first grasped the sceptre, the more entirely under the sway of his own especial favourite, Charles de Luynes. We will but glance, in passing, at the humble antecedents of one destined to play a prominent and brilliant part during a brief but very eventful period of French history. His father, Albert de Luynes, son of Guillaume Segur, a canon of the cathedral of Marseilles, and of the said ecclesiastic's housekeeper, having shown great courage and aptitude as an officer of the royal bodyguard of archers, obtained from Henry the Great the governorship of Pont-Saint-Esprit. His eldest son, Charles, began life in the modest career of a page in the household of the Count de Lude, who is said to have procured him a small pension for the support of himself and two brothers, and afterwards took him to Court on the occasion of the nuptials of Henry IV. and Marie de' Medici. The sole inheritance of these almost portionless boys was a small dairy-farm, of the annual value of twelve hundred livres. The young page induced the kind-hearted Count to receive his two brothers, who were totally without resources, gratuitously into his suite, in order that he might be able to share with them the four hundred crowns annually, which, together with his slender patrimony, formed his sole income. This favour conceded, the three young adventurers discarded the simple names of Charles, Honoré, and Leon d'Albert, by which they had been previously known, and assumed those of Luynes, Cadenet, and Brantes, from the field, the vineyard, and a small sand island beside them, which comprised their joint estate,—“Possessions,” as Bassompierre facetiously observes, “over which a hare leaped every day.” Poor as they were in worldly gear, the three brothers—bold, handsome, light-hearted, and enterprising lads—continued to exist, with considerable difficulty, as gentlemen; for it was notorious that at this time they had but one cloak—in those days an indispensable article of dress—between them; a circumstance by which two were compelled to avoid observation while the third fulfilled his duties. So little, however, were their services valued by the Count de Lude, that he was in the habit of declaring that they were fit for nothing but “to catch green jays,” a reproach they owed to their skill in dressing sparrowhawks to take small birds; and to which he was far from supposing, when he gave it utterance, that they would ultimately be indebted for an advancement in life and a prosperity almost fabulous.

Such, however, came to pass. Charles de Luynes had not been long

at Court before he ascertained the passion of the young prince for falconry; and having carefully trained two of his miniature hawks, he caused them to be offered in his name to the Dauphin. Louis was delighted by their docility and skill, and desired that the donor should be presented to him. When he found that the page was deeply versed in all the mysteries of that sport to which he was himself so much attached, he thenceforward constantly commanded his attendance whenever he pursued his favourite pastime in the gardens of the Tuileries.

At this period De Luynes had already attained his thirtieth year; and, with admirable self-government, he had so thoroughly controlled himself as to disguise the salient features of his character. No one consequently suspected either his latent ambition, or the violent passions which he had craft enough to conceal; and thus the very individuals who were the objects of his hatred regarded him merely as a shallow and superficial young man, whose whole soul was in the puerile sports to which he had addicted himself.

It was not, however, solely to take small birds that De Luynes aspired when he thus found himself the chosen companion of the Dauphin; he had other talents, which he exerted so zealously that ere long he made himself indispensable. Gifted with a magnificent person, insinuating manners, and that ready tact by which an indolent nature is unconsciously roused to excitement, he soon obtained an extraordinary influence over his royal playmate, by the power which he possessed of overcoming his habitual apathy, and causing him to enter with zest and enjoyment into the pleasures of his age. Henry IV., who perceived with gratification the beneficial effect produced upon the saturnine nature of his son, and who was moreover touched by the paternal devotion of the page, transferred him to the household of the Dauphin, and augmented his income to twelve hundred crowns; and thenceforward he became at once the companion, the counsellor, and the favourite of the young Louis; and at the desire of the Prince he was created *Maître des Oiseaux du Cabinet* (Master of the Royal Aviary).

Time passed on. The great Henry was suddenly struck down by the knife of Ravillac—the Dauphin succeeded to the throne of his murdered father—the regency tottered under the machinations of the great nobles, and the intrigues and rapacity of the Italian favourites of the Queen-mother. Cabals and conspiracies kept the nation in one perpetual state of anxiety and unrest: but the influence of De Luynes continued undiminished; and neither Marie de' Medici nor her ministers apprehended any danger from an association that was fated to produce the most serious consequences, while the princes of the blood were equally disinclined to disturb the amusements by which the young monarch was so entirely absorbed as to pay little attention to the important events which succeeded each other about him.

As he grew older, Louis became still more attached to his favourite.

His discontented spirit made him irritable under every disappointment, and vindictive towards those by whom his wishes were opposed. He detested alike explanation and remonstrance, and from De Luynes he never encountered either the one or the other. Under the remonstrances of his mother he became sullen: to the arrogant assumption of the princes and the Marshal d'Ancre he opposed an apathetic silence, which caused them to believe that it was unfelt; and it was only to De Luynes that he poured forth all his indignation, that he complained with bitterness of the iron rule of Marie, the insolence of his nobles, and the ostentatious profusion of the Italian; contrasting the first with his own helplessness, the second with the insignificance to which he was condemned, and the last to the almost penury to which he was compelled to submit.

No prince had ever a more attentive or a more interested auditor. The enemies of the young Louis were also those of his favourite; and the eldest son of the old captain of the archer-guard was alike vain and ambitious, and consequently inimical to all who occupied the high places to which he himself aspired. Moreover, the powerlessness and poverty of the young monarch necessarily involved those of his follower; and thus both by inclination and by interest De Luynes was bound to share the antipathies of his master.

Like all favourites, moreover, he soon made a host of personal adversaries; while, as these were far from suspecting the height to which he was ultimately destined to attain, they took little pains to dissemble their dislike and contempt of the new minion; and thus, ere long, De Luynes had amassed a weighty load of hatred in his heart. To him it appeared that all the great dignitaries of the kingdom, although born to the rank they held, were engrossing honours which, possessed as he was of the favour of the sovereign, should have been conferred on himself; but the especial antipathy of the arrogant adventurer was directed against the Queen, the Marshal d'Ancre, and the President Jeannin. To account for his bitter feeling towards Marie de' Medici, it is only necessary to state that, blinded by his ambition, he had dared to display for the haughty Princess a passion which was coldly and disdainfully repulsed, and that he had vowed to avenge the overthrow of his hopes.

His hatred of Concini is as easily explained, it being merely the jealousy of a rival favourite. As we have already observed, the Italian was to the mother of the King precisely what De Luynes was to the King himself; and as Marie possessed more power than her son, so also was her follower more richly recompensed. The President Jeannin was, likewise, especially distasteful to De Luynes, as he made no secret of his dissatisfaction at the frivolous existence of the young sovereign, and his desire that he should exchange the boyish diversions to which he was addicted for pursuits more worthy of his high station; while, at the same time, he exhibited towards the favourite an undisguised disdain, which excited all the worst passions of its object.

Thus, insignificant as he appeared to those who were basking in favour, and who esteemed themselves too highly to waste one thought upon the obsequious dependent of a youthful and wayward sovereign, who suffered himself to be guided by those about him as though reckless of the result of their conflicting ambitions, it will be readily understood that De Luynes was laying up a store of antipathies, which required only time and opportunity to develop themselves, and to bear the most bitter fruits; and already did the active favourite begin to enjoy a foretaste of the coming harvest. Ever earnest for right, Louis XIII. never exhibited any personal energy to secure it, and consequently could effect nothing of himself; readily prejudiced, alike by his own caprices and by the representations of others, his very anxiety to act as became a monarch rendered him vulnerable to the intrigues of those whose interests tended to mislead his judgment; and as De Luynes, while sharing his superstitious acts of overstrained devotion, or amusing his idleness by the futilities of falconry and other even less dignified sports, did not fail occasionally and cautiously to allude to more serious subjects, the boy-king listened eagerly to the recitals and opinions of his chosen friend, and finished by adopting all his views.

This fact soon became so obvious to Concini, that the wily Italian, who dreaded lest the day might not be far distant when the son of Marie de' Medici would shake off the yoke of her *quasi*-regency and assert his own prerogative, resolved to secure the good offices of De Luynes, and for this purpose he induced M. de Condé to restore to the King the government of Amboise; representing to the Prince the slight importance of such a possession to a person of his rank, and the conviction which its voluntary surrender must impress upon the ministers of his desire to strengthen the royal cause. Let it not be supposed, however, that at the period of which we write, such a surrender could for a moment be anticipated gratuitously; and thus, when the first Prince of the blood was at length induced to yield to the representations of his insidious adviser, the terms of the bargain were fully understood on both sides; but even when he had succeeded in obtaining the consent of M. de Condé himself to the arrangement, Concini had still to overcome the scruples of the Queen-mother, to whom he hastened to suggest that the vacated government should be bestowed upon Charles de Luynes.

As he anticipated, Marie de' Medici was startled by so extraordinary a proposition. De Luynes was a mere hanger-on of the Court; the companion of the boyish pleasures of her son; and without one claim to honour or advancement. But these very arguments strengthened the position of the Marshal. The poverty of the King's favourite secured, as he averred, his fidelity to those who might lay the foundations of his fortune; and if, as the astute Italian moreover cleverly remarked, De Luynes were in truth merely the playmate of the monarch, he possessed at least the merit of engrossing his thoughts, and of thus rendering him less desirous to control or criticise the measures of others. Marie yielded to

this argument; she had begun to love power for its own sake; and she could not disguise from herself that her future tenure of authority must depend solely upon the will of the young sovereign. In order, therefore, to secure to herself the good offices of one so influential with his royal master as De Luynes, she consented to follow the advice of Concini, who forthwith, in her name, remunerated M. de Condé, for his secession, by upwards of a hundred thousand crowns, and the grandson of Guillaume Segur, canon of Marseilles, became governor of the city and fortress of Amboise.

The rise of Charles de Luynes, therefore, from poverty and obscurity to an assured position at Court was singularly rapid. In a few years, dating from his first appointment, he became Captain of the Louvre, June, 1615; Counsellor of State, November, 1615; Captain of the Band of Gentlemen in Ordinary, December, 1615; Grand Falconer of France, October, 1616, an office which he purchased from the heirs of André de la Chastaigneraye; and Master of the Royal Aviary, March, 1617. He had apartments in the Louvre. His influence became so great, that it cast a dark shadow across the path of the Queen-mother's favourite Concini, and scared the confident Italian at the summit of his fortunes. With the bribe of the governorship of Amboise he had hoped to have got rid of the presence of his rival, but De Luynes refused to quit the Court for the seat of his government; and Sauveterre, first valet of the King's chamber, foreshadowed the disgrace with which his friend was menaced, in remarking to the Queen-mother in the presence of Concini,—“You have then, madam, another favourite wherewith to provide the King, your son, of whom you would be more sure than of De Luynes; for that he must have one, you well know; and should you by chance choose one more enterprising and of loftier rank, you perhaps might repent of getting rid of the present favourite.” Following this counsel, therefore, De Luynes was suffered to enjoy the royal presence unmolested, but he laboured, nevertheless, long and unremittingly to undermine the power of Concini. How the destruction of the Queen's Italian favourite was at length brought about by De Luynes, we have already shown in our narrative of the career of Eleonora Galigai and her husband, Concino Concini.

It was only a change of masters for the young Louis, and it left his Grand Falconer to reign in his rival's stead. “Never,” says Voltaire, “did favourite exert further a predominating influence over a weak and irresolute mind; he obtained all he wished, or, to speak with more exactness, he accorded everything he desired.” Ignorant as he was of all that concerned affairs of State, he hesitated not, however, to take the government upon himself single-handed. Immediately after Concini's murder, he gave proofs alike of his jealousy and his avidity. Desirous above all things to withdraw the King from the control of his mother, he retained her for fifteen days prisoner in her own apartments, prevented her from all communication with her son, save in writing, and caused her to be exiled

to Blois. He next disembarrassed himself of one of her creatures named Travail, a priest initiated in all her secrets, in making him, under a false accusation, appear before the parliament, by which he was condemned to be broken on the wheel. The same tribunal rendered him a more signal service. It cited the Marchioness d'Ancre to answer for heavier crimes and, through the pressing solicitations of the all-powerful favourite, condemned her to the scaffold, and the reversion of her enormous treasures to the Crown. Notwithstanding this latter clause, De Luynes easily succeeded in constituting himself her heir; but it was not without difficulty that he managed to appropriate the principal portion of the coveted wealth of his victims. Du Vair, with a firmness for which the favourite was not prepared, refused for a considerable time to indorse the letters of consignment which had been granted by the King to that effect; declaring that as the property of Concini and his family had been confiscated to the Crown, it could not be otherwise disposed of. This difficulty, however, was surmounted after the fashion of the period; and the signature of the scrupulous minister was purchased by the rich bishopric of Lisieux after which De Luynes of himself negated the destruction of the magnificent hotel of the ill-fated Marshal, to which he transferred his own establishment; and then proceeded to enforce his claims upon the funder property in Rome. His pretension was, however, opposed by the Pope who declared that all monies confiscated within the Roman States must necessarily revert to himself; and Louis XIII., after having in vain endeavoured to induce the Sovereign-Pontiff to rescind this declaration, found himself ultimately compelled to make a donation of the five hundred thousand francs, claimed by his favourite, to the cathedral of St. Peter.*

The Grand Duke of Tuscany, in his turn, refused to recognise the right of De Luynes to the funds which had been intrusted to him by the Marshal d'Ancre, but from a higher and a holier motive; as the young Count de la Péna was no sooner set at liberty, with an injunction immediately to leave France, than he received him with all the sympathy due to his unmerited misfortunes, and put him in possession of this remnant of his inheritance. Thenceforward the son of Concini remained in Italy until the year 1631, when he fell a victim to the plague.

After the departure of the Queen-mother, the Court remained a fortnight at Vincennes, upon which the King returned to the Louvre; where instead of endeavouring, according to the sage advice of his ministers, to render the absence of his mother unfelt by the adoption of measures calculated to prove that he was equal to the responsibility he had been so eager to assume, Louis soon returned to the puerile amusements he had latterly affected to despise, and spent the day in colouring prints, beating a drum, blowing a bugle, or making *jets d'eau* with quills. On one occasion, when Bassompierre was complimenting him upon the facility

* Sismondi : Vol. XXII. Le Vassor : Vol. I.

with which he acquired everything that he desired to learn, he replied, with great complacency, "I must begin again with my hunting-horn, which I blow very well; and I will practise for a whole day."

"Be careful, sire," was the reply of the courtier; "I would not advise your Majesty to indulge too much in such a diversion, as it is injurious to the chest; and I have even heard it asserted that the late King Charles IX. burst a bloodvessel on the lungs from his abuse of that instrument, an accident which terminated his life."

"You are wrong, sir," said Louis, with one of his cold, saturnine looks; "it was his quarrel with Catherine de' Medici which caused his death. If he had not followed the best advice of the Maréchal de Retz, and resided with her at Monceaux, he would not have died so young."*

Bassompierre was silenced; and thenceforward resolved never again to mention the name of the Queen-mother in the presence of his royal master.

In order to enlist the popular opinion in his favour, De Luynes had induced the King to recall the old ministers to power; and the people, still remembering the wisdom which they had displayed during their administration, welcomed with joy the reappearances of Sillery, Villeroy, and Jeannin in council; but although the favourite ostensibly recognised their privileges, he was far from intending to permit their interference with his own interests; and so thoroughly did he enslave the mind of the young King, that while Louis, like a schoolboy who had played truant, and who was resolved to enjoy his new-found liberty to the uttermost, was constantly changing his place of abode, and visiting in turn St. Germain, Fontainebleau, Villers-Cotterets, and Monceaux, without one care save the mere amusement of the hour, De Luynes was multiplying his precautions to prevent a reconciliation between the mother and son; an event which must, as he believed, whenever it should occur, prove the ruin of his own fortunes. For this purpose, so soon as he saw a cloud upon the brow of the royal stripling, he hastened to devise for him some new and exciting pursuit, which might tend to deaden his remorse for the past, and to render him more conscious of the value of that moral emancipation which he had purchased at so fearful a price; but ere long even this subtle policy failed to dissipate the apprehensions of the favourite. Like all persons who occupy a false position, of which they fully appreciate the uncertain tenure, he became suspicious of all around him; and would not allow any individual, whatever might be his rank, to approach the King without his knowledge, nor to attempt to converse with him in private. Thus, therefore, while Louis fondly believed that he had indeed become a monarch in fact as well as in name, he was in reality more enslaved than ever.

De Luynes having thus obtained the most absolute power, not only over the King personally, but also over all State affairs—being anxious to

* Rohan. Memoir, Book 1.

strengthen his position yet more by a great alliance, after having for a time contemplated a union with the daughter of the Duke of Vendôme ultimately entered into a negotiation for the hand of Mademoiselle de Montbazon,* daughter of Hercule de Rohan, Duke de Montbazon. This negotiation proved successful; and through her means he became closely connected with the most ancient and powerful families in the kingdom. The marriage took place on the 13th of September, 1617, and the bride was admitted to the honours of the *tabouret*; while in order to render him more acceptable to the haughty houses into which the favour of his sovereign had thus afforded him ingress, the exulting favourite was elevated to a duchy-peerage, and took his seat in the parliament.

Thus rapidly enriched and ennobled, De Luynes next caused himself to be appointed Lieutenant of the King in Normandy; and this was no sooner done than he entered into a negotiation for one of the principal governments in the kingdom. Carried away by the full tide of fortune he appeared suddenly to have forgotten that one of the most cogent reasons, which he had so lately given for the necessity of sacrificing the Marshal d'Ancre and his wife, was the enormous wealth of which they had possessed themselves at the expense of the State. His ambition, as well as his avarice, became insatiable; and not contented with pushing his own fortunes to a height never before attained by a mere petty noble, he procured great advantages for his brothers, and lodged them in his apartments in the Louvre. But while Louis remained unconscious or careless of the new bondage into which he had thus fallen, the courtiers and the people were less blind and less forbearing. With that reckless light-heartedness which has enabled the French in all ages to find cause for mirth even in their misfortunes, some wag, less scrupulous than inventive, on one occasion, under cover of the darkness, affixed above the door leading to the rooms occupied by the brothers a painting, which represented the adoration of the Magi, beneath which was printed in bold letters, "At the sign of the Three Kings," a practical jest which afforded great amusement to the Court.

Another and similar joke current at the time was the following:—The Duke de Bouillon, chief of the malcontents who had taken up arms on seeing that the successor of Concini governed in his master's name with the same despotism which had rendered the former favourite so odious, said openly on all occasions that "the Court was the same wine shop as ever, although they had changed the stamp of their cork."

It must, however, be conceded that De Luynes, a man of subtle and far-sighted intelligence, having succeeded in becoming the depository of

* After the death of the Constable de Luynes, she married Claude de Lorraine, Duke de Chevreuse, and became celebrated towards the close of the reign of Louis XIII., and during the minority of his successor, for her wit, her beauty, her profligacy, and her political intrigues. She died at a very advanced age in 1679.

the entire power of the Sovereign, announced the fact by inaugurating an administration wise and firm enough to reduce to silence the most determined of his antagonists. In 1619, he obtained the liberty of Henry, Prince of Condé, who had been arrested by order of Marie de' Medici. By such stroke of policy he separated the cause of the princes of the blood from that of the Protestants, which rendered the latter more easily reducible to submission, and prevented them from putting in execution the plan which they had formed, since the death of Henry IV., of making France a federative republic, on the model of the German Empire, as it then existed. But the intrigues which De Luynes made use of to widen the breach between Louis XIII. and his mother, together with his illimitable ambition and rapacity, soon alienated from him the respect of all Frenchmen. Notwithstanding his anxiety to secure the confidence and goodwill of the favourite, Richelieu had been one of the first to feel the effects of the hatred conceived against those who under any pretext adhered to the interests of the Queen-mother. It is true that on leaving Paris he had pledged himself to watch all her proceedings, and immediately to report every equivocal circumstance which might fall under his observation. But his antecedents were notorious; he had obtained the favour of Marie de' Medici through the influence of the Marshal d'Ancre, and no faith was placed in his promise. De Luynes and his ministers were alike distrustful of his sincerity; and only a few weeks after his arrival at Blois, an order reached him by which he was directed to retire forthwith to his priory at Coussay, near Mirabeau, and to remain there until he should receive further instructions. In vain did Marie de' Medici—who, whatever might be her misgivings of his good faith, was nevertheless acutely conscious of the value of Richelieu's adhesion—entreat of the King to permit his return to Blois; her request was denied, and the bishop had no alternative save obedience; nor was it long ere De Luynes induced Louis to banish him to Avignon.

Anxious to destroy any latent hope, in which she might still indulge of a return to power, De Luynes resolved to effect the ruin of all who had evinced any anxiety in her restoration; and there was suddenly given to the council a commission "to bring to trial the authors of the cabals and factions, having for their object the recal of the Queen-mother, the deliverance of the Prince of Condé, and the overthrow of the State." The first victims of this sweeping accusation were the Baron de Persan, the brother-in-law of Vitry, and de Bournonville, his brother, together with the brothers Siti, of Florence, and Durand, the composer of the King's ballets. The result of the trial proved the virulence of the prosecutors, but at the same time revealed their actual weakness, as they feared to execute the sentence pronounced against the principal offenders, and were compelled to satiate their vengeance upon the more insignificant and less guilty of the accused parties.

M. de Persan was simply exiled from the Court; Bournonville was

condemned to death, but not executed. The three pamphleteers (for so were in reality the Siti and Marie Durand), whose only crime appeared to have been that they had written a diatribe against De Luynes, did not, however, escape so easily, as the two former were broken on the wheel and burned in the Place de Grève, while the third was hanged.

Such a wholesale execution, upon so slight a pretext, aroused the indignation of the citizens, and excited the murmurs of the people, who could not brook that the person of an ennobled adventurer should thus be held sacred, while the widow of Henry the Great was exposed to the insults every time-serving courtier. Nor were the nobles less disgusted by such an evidence of heartless vanity and measureless pretension. The Dukes Rohan and Montbazou, despite their family connection with the arrogant favourite, had already openly endeavoured to effect a reconciliation between Louis and the Queen-mother; and the other disaffected princes no sooner witnessed the effect produced upon the populace by the cruel tyranny of De Luynes, than they resolved to profit by this manifestation, and to lose no time in attempting the deliverance of the royal prisoner.

Instant measures were taken to this effect; and meanwhile the favourite, lulled into false security, was wholly unconscious of this new conspiracy, believing that by his late deed of blood he had awed all his adversaries into submission.

The Queen-mother escaped in the night by a ladder from the window of her closet, attended only by the Count de Brienne, her equerry, a single waiting woman, who carried her casket of jewels, and two other individuals of her household. It was not, however, without considerable difficulty that she accomplished this portion of her undertaking, as at the last moment it was discovered that, from her great bulk, the casement would scarcely admit the passage of her person. Despair, nevertheless, made her desperate; and after several painful efforts she succeeded in forcing herself through the aperture; but her nerves were so much shaken by this unlucky circumstance that, when she had reached the platform, whence a second ladder was to conduct her to the ditch of the fortress, she declared her utter inability to descend it, and she was ultimately wrapped in a thick cloak, and cautiously lowered down by the joint exertions of her attendants. The Count de Brienne and M. du Plessis then supported her to the carriage which was waiting at the drawbridge; and thus Marie de' Medici found herself a fugitive in her own kingdom, surrounded by half a dozen individuals, possessed of no other resources than her jewels. They proceeded to Mont-Richard by the light of torches, and were there joined by d'Epernon and the Archbishop of Toulouse, under whose escort she reached Angoulême.

When the news of the Queen's escape reached the court, De Luynes, who was obliged, in conformity with the King's wish, to enter into a treaty with her, offered, as the basis of his negotiation, that Marie de' Medici should abandon the Duke d'Epernon, and that he should be made

example of. It was at this period that Richelieu first laid the foundation of his power by his efforts to conciliate the King and the Queen-mother, and an interview, which took place at the Château de Courcières, in Touraine, was the result of his ceaseless endeavours.

On his return to Paris after his interview with the Queen-mother, Louis bestowed the government of Picardy upon De Luynes, who resigned that of the Isle of France, which he had previously held, to the Duke de Montbazou, his father-in-law. The two brothers of the favourites were created Marshals of France; Brantes, by the title of Duke de Piney-Luxembourg—the heiress of that princely house having, by command of the King, bestowed her hand upon him, to the disgust of all the great nobles, who considered this ill-assorted alliance as an insult to themselves and to their order,—while Cadenet, in order that he might in his turn be enabled to aspire to the promised union with the widowed Princess of Orange, was created Duke de Chaulnes. The latter marriage was not, however, destined to be accomplished, Eleonore de Bourbon rejecting with disdain a proposition by which she felt herself dishonoured; nor can any doubt exist that her resistance was tacitly encouraged by Condé, who, once more free, could have little inclination to ally himself so closely with a family of adventurers, whose antecedents were at once obscure and equivocal. This mortification was, however, lessened to the discomfited favourite by the servility of the Archduke Albert, the Sovereign of the Low Countries, who, being anxious to secure the support of the French King, offered to De Luynes an heiress of the ancient family of Piquigui in Picardy, who had been brought up at the Court of Brussels, as a bride for his younger brother. Despairing, despite all his arrogance, of affecting the marriage of Cadenet with a princess of the blood, the favourite gladly accepted the proffered alliance; and M. de Chaulnes was appointed Lieutenant-General in Picardy, of which province De Luynes was the governor, and where he possessed numerous fine estates.

As no chevalier of the order of the Holy Ghost had been created since the death of Henry IV., their number had so much decreased, that only twenty-eight remained; and De Luynes, aware that himself and his brothers would necessarily be included in the next promotion, urged Louis XIII. to commence the year (1620) by conferring so coveted an honour upon the principal nobles of the kingdom. The suggestion was favourably received, and so profusely adopted, that no less than fifty-five individuals were placed upon the list, at the head of which stood the name of the Duke d'Anjou. But although some of the proudest titles in France figured in this creation, it included several of minor rank, who would have been considered ineligible during the preceding reigns; a fact which was attributed to the policy of the favourite, who was anxious to render so signal a distinction less invidious in his own case and that of his relations; while others were omitted, whose indignation at this slight increased the ranks of the malcontents.

Marie de' Medici was additionally irritated that these honours should have been conceded without her participation ; for she immediately perceived that the intention of the favourite had been to reserve to himself the credit of obtaining so signal a distinction for the noblemen and gentlemen upon whom it was conferred, and to render her own helplessness more apparent. As such an outrage required, however, some palliation, and De Luynes, moreover, being anxious not to drive the Queen-mother to extremity, he induced the King to forward for her inspection the names of those who were about to receive the blue ribbon, offering at the same time to include one or two of her personal adherents, should she desire it ; but when, on running her eye over the list, Marie perceived that, in addition to the deliberate affront involved in a delay which only enabled her to acquire the knowledge of an event of this importance after all the preliminary arrangements were completed, it had been carefully collated so as to exclude all those who had espoused her own cause, and to admit several who were known to be obnoxious to her, she coldly replied that she had no addition to make to the orders of the King, and returned the document in the same state as she had received it.

The indignation expressed by the Queen-mother on this occasion was skilfully increased by Richelieu, who began to apprehend that so long as Marie remained inactive in her measures, he should find no opportunity of furthering his own fortunes ; while, at the same time, he was anxious to revenge himself upon De Luynes, who had promised to recompense his treachery to his royal mistress by a seat in the conclave ; and it had been confided to him that the first vacant seat was pledged to the Archbishop of Toulouse, the son of the Duke d'Epemon. In order, therefore, at once to indulge his vengeance, and to render his services more than ever essential to the favourite, and thus wring from his fears what he could not anticipate from his good faith, he resolved to exasperate the spirit of the Queen-mother, and to incite her to open rebellion against her son and his government.

Circumstances favoured his project. The two first princes of the blood, M. de Condé, and the Count de Soissons, had at this period a serious quarrel as to who should present the finger-napkin to the King at the dinner-table, Condé claiming that privilege as first prince of the blood, and Soissons maintaining that it was his right as Grand Master of the royal household. These two great nobles, heedless of the presence of the Sovereign, each seized a corner of the *serviette*, which he refused to relinquish ; and the quarrel became at length so loud and unseemly, that Louis endeavoured to restore peace by commanding that it should be presented by his brother, the Duke d'Anjou ; but although the two angry princes were compelled to yield the object of contention, he could not reduce them to silence, and this absurd dissension immediately split the court into two factions, the Duke de Guise and the friends of the favourite declaring themselves for Condé, while Mayenne, Longueville, and several others, espoused the cause of the Count de Soissons.

These successive defections greatly alarmed the favourite, who became more than ever urgent for the return of the Queen-mother to the capital; but a consciousness of her increasing power, together with the insidious advice of Richelieu, rendered her deaf alike to his representations and his promises. In this extremity, De Luynes resolved to leave no means untried to regain the Duke de Guise, and for this purpose the King was easily persuaded to propose a double marriage in his family, by which it was believed that his own allegiance, and that of the Prince de Condé, to the royal cause, or rather to that of the favourite, would be alike secured. M. de Condé was to give his daughter to the Prince de Joinville, the elder son of M. de Guise; while his third son, the Duke de Joyeuse, was to become the husband of Mademoiselle de Luynes. The marriage articles were accordingly drawn up, although the two latter personages were still infants at the breast; but when he took the pen in his hand to sign the contract, de Guise hesitated, and appeared to reflect.

"What are you thinking of, Monsieur le Duc?" inquired Louis, as he remarked the hesitation of the Prince.

"I protest to you, Sire," was the reply, "that while looking at the name of the bride, I had forgotten my own, and that I was seeking to recall it."

De Luynes bit his lips and turned away, while a general smile proved how thoroughly the meaning of the haughty Duke had been appreciated by the courtiers.

De Luynes now entered into a series of negotiations, having for their object the consent of the Queen-mother to resume her position at the French court; but Marie, with a more fixed determination than ever, clung to the comparatively independent position she had secured, and thus rendered the negotiations useless. It was not, therefore, without considerable misgivings that, early in July, De Luynes accompanied the king to the frontier of Normandy, where it had been decided that he should place himself at the head of his army.

The success of the royal forces exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the young Sovereign, and the discomfiture of the Queen-mother's cause was so complete, that a treaty, signed at Angoulême, compelled her to accept such conditions as it might please her son to accord her. The favourite, in order to force his enemies into concluding a peace, knew well how to profit by the advantages obtained by the King's troops. The conditions of that peace, however, were not altogether satisfactory to his pride. Seeking in his personal interest, therefore, a pretext for reviving the office of Constable of France, vacant since the death of Marshal de Montmorency, he inveigled the veteran Duke de Lesdiguières with the promise of obtaining it for him from the King, and managed so well, that he succeeded to the post himself in 1621—an object which he had long secretly coveted to attain. On the 2nd of April, Charles Albert, Duke de Luynes, therefore, was duly invested with the sword of the Constable of

France; and thus in the short space of four years, without having distinguished himself either as a warrior or a statesman, had risen from the obscure position of a gentleman of the household, and the petty noble of a province, to the highest dignity which could be conferred on a subject.

The ceremony of his investiture was conducted with extraordinary pomp; and when he had taken the oath, De Luynes received from the hands of the King a sword, richly ornamented with diamonds, which was buckled on by Gaston, Duke d'Anjou. The murmurs elicited by this extraordinary promotion were universal; and the rather as it had long been promised to the Duke de Lesdiguières, who was compelled to content himself with a brevet of Marshal of France, and the title of Colonel-General of the royal army, which constituted the veteran soldier the lieutenant of de Luynes, who had never been upon a field of battle.

Later in the year, the new Constable eagerly seized the opportunity of exerting his authority, and of showing that he was not wholly unworthy of the first dignity in the kingdom, in a campaign against the Protestants; and an army of forty thousand infantry and eight thousand horse was marched towards the Loire, at the head of which were the King himself, De Luynes, and the Marshal de Lesdiguières; while, as though the projected expedition had been a mere party of pleasure, not only did a crowd of the great nobles volunteer to swell the ranks of the already gigantic force, but the two Queens, the Duchess de Luynes, and a numerous suite of ladies, also accompanied the troops, to share in the campaign. The result of this fearful contention is well-known. The unhappy Protestants were driven from their strongholds; and with the exception of Montauban, which was so gallantly defended that the King was ultimately compelled to raise the siege, they found themselves utterly despoiled, and exposed to every species of insult.

No event could have been more unfortunate for the ambitious Constable than the successful defence of Montauban. Louis had begun to love war for its own sake, but he was also jealous of success; and he felt with great bitterness this first mortification. He had, moreover, become conscious that he was a mere puppet in the hands of his ambitious favourite; and he was already becoming weary of a moral vassalage of which he had been unable to calculate the extent. As the brilliant *Connétable* flashed past him, glittering with gold, the plumes of his helmet dancing in the wind, and the housings of his charger sparkling with gems, he looked after him with a contemptuous scowl, and bade the nobles among whom he stood admire the regal bearing of *le Roi Luynes*; nor was he the less bitter, because he could not suppress a consciousness of his own inability to dispense with the services of the man whom he thus criticized.

The discontent of the monarch, and the failure at Montauban, for which De Luynes was held responsible, helped to revive the hatred of the courtiers against a favourite who knew no bounds, said they, either to his projects for aggrandisement, or his thirst for wealth. The King's mind

once disabused, it easily occurred to him to remember that, in the brief space of three years, three considerable estates had been erected into duchy-pepages for that same personage and his two brothers, that the revenues and lands possessed by those three rendered them so powerful, that very soon the Sovereign himself would be unable to curb them, if the safety of the State should render it necessary. The ambitious adventurer, having thus reached the summit of fortune and greatness, kept his eyes averted from the abyss that gaped in his path, until a premature death anticipated the downfall to which he was so rapidly hastening. Louis, conversing one day with a courtier, whom he had lately admitted to his familiarity, upon the insatiable cupidity of the Constable and his creatures, remarked, that "he had never seen any other individual possessing so many relations; that they came to court in shoals, but not one of them dressed in silk." De Luynes, Keeper of the Seals as well as Constable, thus uniting to the highest military rank the first dignity of the magistrature, thought to augment their individual grandeur by a sumptuousness which seemed an insult to royalty. The feeble monarch expressed his resolution to take vengeance upon the *ingrate*, as he termed him, and never to rest satisfied until he had made him thoroughly disgorge all of which he had possessed himself. But the monarch's rage evaporated in exclamations and complaints attended by no result. Upon one point Louis XIII. greatly resembled his mother; with all his arrogance and love of power, he possessed no innate strength of purpose, and constantly required extraneous support; but it was already easy for those about him to perceive, that fear alone continued to link him with the once all powerful favourite. Rumour said, moreover, that superadded to the jealousy which the King entertained of the daily increasing assumption of the Constable, there existed another cause of discontent. The Duchess de Luynes was, as we have said, both beautiful and fascinating, and Louis had not been proof against her attractions, although his ideas of gallantry never overstepped the bounds of the most scrupulous propriety; the lady had on her part welcomed his homage with more warmth than discretion; and the favourite had not failed to reproach her for a levity by which he considered himself dishonoured. Madame de Luynes had retorted in no measured terms, and the young Sovereign, who detested to find himself involved in affairs of this nature, and who had, moreover, reason to believe that he was not the only individual favoured by the smiles of the attractive beauty, soon evinced an hatred towards both husband and wife, which encouraged the enemies of M. de Luynes to hint that the reverse, which his Majesty had lately suffered at Montauban, might be attributed to the incapacity and selfishness of the Constable. The opinion soothed the wounded vanity of the King, and he talked vehemently of his regret for the brave men who had fallen, among whom was the Duke de Mayenne; and bitterly complained of the dishonour to which he had been subjected; while, in order to avenge himself at once upon De Luynes and the Duchess, he condescended

to the meanness of informing the former that the Prince de Joinville was enamoured of his wife; and subsequently boasted to Bassompierre that he had done so. The Marquis listened in astonishment to this extraordinary communication, and, in reply, ventured to assure his Majesty that he had committed a serious error in seeking to cause a misunderstanding between a married couple.

"God will forgive me for it, should He see fit to do so," was the sullen retort of Louis; "at all events it gave me great pleasure to be revenged on him, and to cause him this annoyance; and before six months have elapsed, I will make him disgorge all his gains."

The rumour of his projected disgrace soon reached the ears of the bewildered favourite, who instantly resolved to redeem himself by some more successful achievement. He accordingly ordered the troops to march upon and besiege Monheur, an insignificant town on the Garonne, which was feebly garrisoned by two hundred and sixty men. As he had foreseen, the place soon capitulated, but the late reverse had rendered Louis less accessible than ever to the claims of mercy; and although by the terms of the treaty he found himself compelled to spare the lives of the troops, numbers of the inhabitants were put to death, and the town was sacked and burned. This paltry triumph, however, did not suffice to reinstate the Constable in the good graces of his royal master, who continued to indulge in the most puerile complaints against his former favourite; whose mortification at so sudden and unexpected a reverse of fortune so seriously affected his health, that while the ruins of the ill-fated town were still smouldering, he expired, in an adjacent village, of a purpurine fever, which had already caused considerable ravages in the royal army.

When intelligence of the decease of De Luynes was communicated to the King, he did not even affect the slightest regret; and the courtiers at once perceived that the demise of the man, upon whom he had lavished so many and such unmerited distinctions, was regarded by Louis as a well-timed release. So careless, indeed, did the resentful monarch show himself of the common observances of decency, that he gave no directions for his burial; and, profiting by this omission, the enemies of the unfortunate Constable pillaged his tents of their effects, and carried off every article of value, not leaving him even a sheet to supply his graveclothes. The Marshal de Chaulnes, and the Duke de Luxembourg, his brothers, with whom at his first entrance into life he had shared his slender income, and whom, in his after days of prosperity, he had alike ennobled and enriched, looked on in silence upon this desecration of his remains, lest, by resenting the outrage, they should incur the coldness of the King; and it is on record that the Abbé Rucellai, and one of his friends, alone had the courage and generosity to furnish the necessary funds for embalming the body, and effecting its transport to its last resting-place.

After the death of the Duke de Luynes, we find, that though his confidant, M^{me} de Luynes, was arrested and imprisoned in For-l'Évêque, his brothers

remained at Court, enjoying a brilliant position. If De Luynes attained the dignity of Constable undeservedly, the art with which he laid the foundation of the towering structure of his fortune, amidst the powerful factions by which he was on all sides assailed, and over which he found a way to triumph without effusion of blood, authorises the belief that such success was not attributable to chance alone, and that he could not have been destitute of superior qualities and talents, as his enemies and contemporary satirists have freely asserted. At all events, we may distrust the majority of the invectives launched against him, as emanating from men who were jealous of his power. In judging him by his actions, we are compelled to acknowledge that he rendered great and important services to the King, which Louis recompensed with as much justice as generosity. The "bird-catcher" De Luynes had snatched France from the gripe of that cabal, which, having opposed the grand projects of Henry IV., and brought the realm once more under that Spanish influence, from which the royal soldier had with so much difficulty rescued it, had ended, it was believed, by compassing the assassination of the popular monarch. M. de Michelet goes so far, indeed, as to assert that De Luynes, by causing the Marshal d'Ancre to be struck down by Vitry, saved the King's life, which was threatened by the cabal. The voluminous correspondence of the Constable, preserved in the Chateau de Dampierre, induces the conviction that he was faithfully devoted to the young King, and that his aim was to subject to royal authority all those who had broken away from it during the deplorable regency of Marie de' Medici—whether nobles, Protestants, or the Queen-mother herself. In short, he began that difficult task which Cardinal Richelieu had the glory of achieving. Such a struggle, therefore, naturally excited against him the recriminations of his numerous adversaries. Moreover, both as regards his good qualities and his defects, anything of singularity is explained by the extreme facility of disposition, which formed so remarkable a feature in the character of Louis XIII. There are but few favourites whose elevation, always envied or detested, offers absolute evidence for or against their personal character; all depending upon the Sovereign who has served them as ladder and prop, together with the circumstances under which they lived. One historian has remarked of the famous Constable, that "he did a great deal of good for his friends, and very little harm to his enemies." This after all is but negative praise, for the French nation at that period needed a strong-handed minister of the calibre of Richelieu. Père Griffet seems to have pronounced a more equitable judgment upon the Constable,—“So lofty a fortune, prepared and sustained with so much skill and conduct, was certainly not the result of chance, nor the work of a man devoid of merit.”

A POLISH ADVENTURE.

THERE were sixteen candidates for the appointment, so that the chances against me, as an arithmetical friend observed, were exactly fifteen to one. Yet, much to the joy of my two sisters and my poor old aunt, not to mention little Arthur at school, I, Alfred Capel Knox, civil engineer, was duly installed as managing superintendent of the Chorzow Mining Company. This was a fine new company, partly English, partly Polish or Russian, as to its shareholders, and which had been established with a view to what the French call the "*exploitation*" of some large and valuable salt mines, situated in the south of Poland, in the government of Radom. Considerable expectations of profit were entertained by the projectors of this joint-stock enterprise, and the salary and poundage which were to reward the services of the resident manager had been fixed on so handsome a scale as to allure many competitors. It happened, however, that of all those who sent in their testimonials to the directors, no one, myself excepted, had the slightest practical experience of working a salt mine. I, by great good fortune, as I thought, had been for many months engaged on some of the principal salt mines in Cheshire, and to this was doubtless due the success of my application.

All went smoothly at first. The Chorzow Mine proved fully deserving of the good word of those scientific men who had reported so favourably of its capabilities, as to draw forth a large subscription from some of the most prudent merchants in the City. The country, hilly and well wooded, was justly esteemed one of the healthiest provinces of Poland, and living was excessively cheap. My own house was of timber, certainly, but of timber so massive and dark with age, so smeared with clay and pitch as to its seams and joints, so sound and seasoned, as to be thoroughly proof against the bitter Polish winter. It belonged to the Company, and was by far the best dwelling in the hamlet of Chorzow. At Odrzipol, a small town or overgrown village, four or five versts away, there were, however, several tolerable houses, and a few shops, on which we depended for supplies. Brandy, rye bread, and pumpkins, with milk and a scanty amount of vegetables, were all that Chorzow could offer, and on these, and the rations of bacon and lard, biscuit and cheese, which we issued along with money-wages on stated days, our workmen subsisted contentedly enough.

Yet Chorzow had a lion,—a show-place, which, in a more civilized region of the world, would have attracted crowds of visitors, but which, in that secluded province, was abandoned to bats and owls. This was the ruined castle of Jagellon-Chorzow, a grand and stately pile, long uninhabited, and fast crumbling to its downfall. The castle stood within arrowshot of the main shaft of our mine, and there were rumours among the peasantry to the effect that a passage existed from the vaults of the castle to the subterranean galleries of the mine. If so, it had, to all

appearance, been long since blocked up or forgotten, since no one was able even to conjecture which portion of the caverns communicated with the ruinous mansion. What lent, however, some colour to the tradition was the fact that not only the neighbouring lands and the hamlet, but the greater part of the rich mine itself, had belonged to the lords of the castle.

The former owners were the Jagellons—Counts Palatine in old days—and collaterally related to the royal race of Jagellon, whose scions had been hereditary kings of Poland before the monarchy was rendered elective. Their family was one of the wealthiest and most powerful in the kingdom, but utter ruin had overtaken them since the Russian domination had become firmly established. The estates had been confiscated, and the salt mines, which had formed not the least valuable portion of the property, had been annexed to the Crown mines adjoining, and were included in the same charter under which our Company was authorized to work the remainder. It was vaguely understood that the Jagellon family was not extinct, but that its living representative, whether in exile or serving in some penal regiment against the Circassians, was civilly and legally “dead,” and his claims extinguished.

“I cannot too forcibly impress upon you, Mr. Knox, how all-important to the interests of the Company it will be that you should be most guarded in your dealings with the natives of the country,” our grave chairman had said, before a full board of directors. “I mean with reference to politics. The very suspicion of any collusion between our agents and the revolutionary committees would prove the ruin of our prospects. Remember how jealous the Russian authorities are of foreign encouragement afforded to Polish malcontents, and be most careful!”

I promised that I would, and certainly I meant to keep my word. I was, as a foreigner, wholly unconnected with party or faction, and had only to keep the even tenor of my way, and to eschew politics as a forbidden thing. I not only made this resolution, but I held to it firmly, and could never, in conversation with the Poles around me, be drawn into the utterance of any sentiment that even the *Northern Bee* or the *Invalide Russe* could have cavilled at. This reticence on my part was not caused by an apathetic indifference to the sufferings of the gentle and pleasing people by whom I was surrounded. On the contrary, I liked them well, far better than I had fancied would be the case, although I own that the indolence and erratic habits of my workmen often provoked me almost to the limits of endurance. They were very good fellows, polite, grateful for the smallest favour, and always obedient when sober, but no dependence could be placed upon their steadiness. I have often left the whole gang deep in the galleries of the mine, working with pick and shovel as lustily as so many Titans, and returning accidentally in an hour's time, have found the tools flung aside, all labour suspended, and the truants gathered in noisy groups, drinking vodka from gourds which they contrived to smuggle into the mine, no one knew how, playing cards, singing, or dancing some

quick measure to the music of a one-stringed fiddle and a shepherd's pipe. In a word, they were exactly like mischievous schoolboys in the absence of the master.

Under these circumstances I was hardly sorry when the old Priest of Odrzipol, a good specimen of the Polish ecclesiastic, who spoke French fluently, and had rendered me some neighbourly good offices on my arrival at Chorzow, called to offer me a brace of recruits, one of whom would be capable of acting as a foreman or overlooker.

"Michael, the elder of the two, is a strong man, sensible, well-conducted, and much better educated than is usual with our peasants," said the old curate, speaking slowly and with a hesitation which I scarcely heeded at the time, but which has often recurred to me since. "You will find him valuable in maintaining discipline among our thoughtless lads. His young brother, from whom he refuses to be separated, since the poor boy is fatherless and motherless, is but a delicate and weakly youth, and will not prove fit for severe toil; but he is intelligent and inoffensive. I think you will be pleased with Michael."

"I am sure I shall," said I, heartily, "if he can really keep my men to their work. We have two hundred of them in the pit, and I declare that half the number of English miners would do double their task. I have been forced, hitherto, to trust to a couple of the village Jews, as they are the only men who could interpret between the labourers and myself; but they have no influence; and I suspect that both Isaac and Jahoeel have been secretly conniving at the smuggling in of illicit spirits. A good foreman shall not be stinted as to wages. By-the-bye, M. Bielski, can your protégé speak French?"

"Oh yes, he speaks French and English fluently," exclaimed the priest; and then reddened and coughed, as if vexed at his own speech, mumbling out something about the man's having received an education unsuited to his rank in life, and about his being the son of a great noble man's steward. He was not, the curate said, in answer to my questions a parishioner of his; that is, not exactly. He came from a distant province, but was a dependent of the Dowager Countess Jagellen, who lived, as I was aware, in a small house at Odrzipol, on a mere pittance spared from the wreck of the property, and who still took a kindly interest in the former retainers of her husband's house.

I had seen the old Countess, a tall, stately dame with grey hair, and a face deeply lined by sorrow, but haughty still, in the midst of poverty and isolation, and I had made some inquiry concerning her story. But I had learned little; M. Bielski, her confessor, who had been chaplain to the old Count, and who still visited his former patroness every day of his life, to drink coffee and play a solemn game of trictrac, was not communicative on the subject of her misfortunes. Her only son, he said, had been so unlucky as to fall under the Emperor's displeasure. The lands of the Jagellen were lost to them for ever. The name would soon be forgotten. I was

interested—how could I help being so?—in the uncomplaining grief of this proud and fond mother, who dwelt, poor and lonely, amid the scenes in which she had once been high and prosperous in worldly estate. And in addition to my natural desire to find a steady subordinate, who could be of real use in the mine, I was glad to be able to make some slight return to the priest for the attention he had shown to the English stranger. He had evidently set his heart upon my taking these recruits of his procuring into the Company's employ; and I could hardly have refused, even had Michael turned out less serviceable than was represented.

When, however, the persons alluded to came to my little office—a sort of wooden shed, with one ill-glazed window—to be hired, I saw no cause to doubt the accuracy of M. Bielski's statements. Michael was, indeed, a fine-looking man, of about thirty, tall, broad-chested, and powerful, with a grave and handsome face, much embrowned by the sun. He spoke French far more fluently than I could do, and English and German almost as well, but was modest and unassuming in his replies to my questions. His younger brother, a very good-looking boy, with dark eyes and a complexion of pale olive, seemed to hang back and to shun observation, and his shy reserve contrasted with the quiet dignity of the elder workman. He spoke nothing but Polish, the misfortunes of the Jagellon family having been shared by their dependents, and the younger brother having thus been deprived of the benefits of education which the other had enjoyed.

"I'll try you as an overlooker, then, and I do not doubt being able to confirm the appointment. Forty Polish florins a month, and rations, are what the Company empower me to offer you, but I fear I cannot estimate the value of your brother's labour at more than ten; that is the rate for boys. By-the-bye, what is your name besides Michael?" asked I, preparing to make an entry in the Company's books.

"Biarna," said the new overlooker; "Michael and Paul Biarna."

"That," said I, smiling, as I dipped my pen in the ink, "sounds to my ear more like a Swedish name than a Polish one. Perhaps you are of Pomeranian extraction?"

"No, sir, we are true Poles," said the workman, speaking in the deepest tone of his deep voice, while his calm eye flashed for a moment. But when I looked up again from my writing, he was, the same as before, quietly and intelligently respectful, with a half smile on his sunburned face. I could not but congratulate myself upon the new ally I had secured.

Matters went on more smoothly in the mine, almost from the day which saw my accomplished overlooker enter upon his new functions. There was more steady industry, and there were fewer outbursts of sportive petulance; while, which concerned the Company more than the rest of the improvement, the yield of salt showed a perceptible increase. Michael's influence over the workmen was surprising; they obeyed his orders with cheerful

alacrity, and even consented to abstain from their favourite potations while below ground, so that during many weeks I never had to complain, as had often been the case before, that a whole gang had maddened or stupefied themselves with the coarse brandy that is the bane of Polish peasant life. Yet Michael was eminently popular among the men, and though reserved in his bearing, he would sometimes take the lead at one of their simple festivals, and sing old Polish ditties in a rich, manly voice, that lent a pathos to the strange words, even to my ear; while the chorus was taken up by the crowd with a fervour and strength that raised many a sullen echo through the grottoes of the mine.

The boy Paul was chiefly employed in carrying messages from his brother to different parts of the subterranean galleries, but I do not think I ever saw him handle a pickaxe, for which rough work his slender frame and delicacy of constitution rendered him unfit. The attachment between these two brothers, between the strong and the weak, was remarkable, and I took much interest in them, but seldom exchanged a word with Michael, save on business, while Paul never appeared to get over his shy timidity in my presence.

Life at Chorzow, it must be owned, was rather monotonous. I visited the mine at fixed hours, measured the amount of work performed, and took a note of the number of quintals of salt raised. Also, I had the accounts to keep, the correspondence to conduct, and the weekly wages to pay to the "head man," or chief, of each gang. But, being a rapid penman and accountant, I soon got through these matters of routine, and had much spare time on my hands. How to fill this up was not very easy. At Odrzipol I had but three or four acquaintances, the pleasantest being the priest. Educated companionship was a rare treat among those dreary heaths and squalid hamlets.

I was hardly sorry, therefore, when M. Bielski informed me that an American gentleman of scientific tastes was staying at the shabby little inn, "The Hôtel de l'Europe," which was Odrzipol's best hostelry, and that he had expressed a strong desire to see the English manager of the famous Chorzow Mine.

"The rather," said M. Bielski, with a smile on his kind old face, puckered with wrinkles like a frost-nipped apple—"the rather that he is suffering, poor man, from a touch of our low fever, so often caught in our marshes, and that we have no surgeon among us, since Dr. Paninski was condemned to the Oural Mines. You have, I know, a well-stored medicine chest, on which your workmen make pretty frequent demands, and some quinine would do the traveller much good. He is called "doctor," but is not a physician—a doctor of laws, I fancy. May I say you will come over?"

I willingly agreed to do so, and on the following day I paid the *promised visit*, bringing with me such simple medicaments as I was aware *were needed* for conjuring away the fever of the country, especially common

in that autumn season. I found the traveller less ill than I had expected—indeed, but for his own half playful account of his symptoms, I should never have guessed him to be indisposed. He was a tall, elderly man, with stooping shoulders, and a polished bald head, fringed with iron grey hair. He had large, grizzled whiskers, and his weak eyes were protected by a green shade. Altogether, he was a queer looking personage, dressed in the inevitable black suit, with satin vest and swallow-tailed coat, which his countrymen affect, but his conversation had a quaint intelligence that pleased me much, and his learning was evidently considerable.

“I’m considerable proud to make your acquaintance, Mr. Knox,” said he, very affably, as I introduced myself; “my name is Twill—Dr. Julius Twill, at your service. You may have observed my humble appellation, sir, in the *Lexington Press*, or the *Scientific American*, if you peruse our journals. A Boston man, sir, of the real Puritan grit, and now travelling at the expense, and at the desire, of the Chicago Geological Society.”

Indeed, it appeared that Dr. Twill’s present profession—he had been editor, schoolmaster, merchant, mariner, and, I believe, preacher, in his time—was that of lecturer and librarian to the above Society, and that he was now in Europe on a mission, the result of which was to be the enriching of the collection of the said Society by many valuable minerals, and a choice store of models relating to matters subterranean. The Doctor had explored Germany and the Baltic provinces of Russia pretty completely, and was now “doing” the Polish strata, previous to migrating to the glacier-worn rocks of Switzerland and the volcanic mountains of Italy. He was an enthusiast in geology, and had sent off, as he told me, many boxes of specimens by way of Hamburg and Riga, while he showed me a trunk and a carpet-bag, wherein his coats and boots were mixed up with gneiss and conglomerate, while there was mica among his shirts, and pudding-stone beside his razors.

Geology was rather a hobby of my own, but I soon got out of my depth in conversing with my learned acquaintance, and should have voted the latter a bore, had he confined his voluble flow of words to professorial topics. But such was far from being the case. Dr. Twill’s talk was varied and amusing, full of personal anecdote and reminiscence, and so pleasant, that his ardour on the subject of science merely gave a racy flavour to his discourse. I found him a delightful companion, and could not forbear accepting his frank invitation to stop and dine with him, on such fare as the wretched inn could supply. The dinner, if not good, was a tolerable one, and the landlord disinterred from some secret nook in his cellarage some very good Rhine wine, smuggled, no doubt, over the frontier. Dr. Twill and I became excellent friends, and the American by no means monopolized the conversation, for I found myself dilating with unwonted garrulity upon my life at Chorzow, respecting which, and the salt mine itself, my new friend could never hear enough. Thus it was that, pleased by the attention with which my stories were received, I told

of all the little cares and troubles of my hermit existence, the escapades of my workpeople, the occasional accidents, the responsibility of my position, and so on.

"This Michael—what's his name?—must be a superior fellow. You are lucky to have a good overseer, since, I guess, these Poles are kinder hard to keep in harness, like our niggers at home," observed the Doctor, as he filled my glass and his own with the creaming *Liebfrauenmilch*; "his brother seems a bad bargain, though."

I answered that Paul Biarna was certainly of very little use, but that Michael was well worth his own wages and those of his weakly brother, twice over, and that I excused the lad's shortcomings on that account. Then the Doctor expressed a strong wish to be allowed to visit the mine, as soon as his health should permit, since he had never explored a salt mine.

"I've been down more shafts than most," said Dr. Twill, meditatively; "I've been down copper mines, iron, lead, and tin, and silver, and coal pits, but never salt. And what you tell me of the wonderful caves, and long galleries, all shining like crystal in the torchlight, is mighty tempting. Yes, I'd like to see your mine, I would. A ruined castle, I think you said, close by it too, which I call an instructive contrast. Little did those bygone tyrant aristocrats who lived in the castle know of the mineral produce underneath!"

I laughingly told the Doctor that for once his conjecture was not a happy one. The lords of the castle of Jagellon-Chorzow had not only known and worked the mine, but the secret passage between the castle and the subterranean depths, so long jealously concealed, perhaps as a refuge in adversity, had been proved to exist otherwise than in tradition. I, by mere accident, in the course of my rambles about the vaults and lower chambers of the ruined fortress, had stumbled upon an underground corridor, which, though dark and full of broken masonry, was yet quite practicable, and which, by the aid of a lantern, I had traced into the mine itself, where it opened on an ancient gallery never now worked, as the salt had been pared away till the sandstone was bare.

"Well, Mr. Knox, if that don't whip all," said Dr. Twill, rubbing his hands delightedly: "a real passage, leading out of a dungeon——"

Not a dungeon, I told him, but the vast cellar beneath the castle. The mouth of the corridor was so masked with long, rank grass and heaps of rubbish, as to invite no attention, while the Poles being a careless race, and superstitious withal, it was hardly surprising that no one had found the spot.

It was agreed that, as soon as the quinine with which I had provided myself, and for the gift of which Dr. Twill was truly grateful, should have banished the mild attack of the fever of which he complained, a long day should be devoted to the exploration of the Chorzow Mine. And we parted on the best of terms.

As I rode slowly homewards through the mean streets of the little town, I was conscious that an unwonted degree of excitement prevailed. It was the evening of a market day, and the chief thoroughfare was full of cattle and swine, of waggons, half broken colts, drunken peasants, and roguish Jew pedlars, who profited by the intoxication of the boors to palm off worthless trinkets and showy raiment upon them. But this was a common scene, and what caught my eye was the unusual spectacle of two or three official persons, escorted by a group of gendarmes with lanterns and carbines, and who were affixing a large placard to the great cross that rose, gaunt and white, in the little square of the Market Place, in front of the mayor's residence. A crowd of eager people, men and women, pressed around the spot, buzzing forth questions or comments, and it was evident that something singular had occurred. I pushed my horse into the foremost ranks, and, by the light of the gendarmes' lanterns, was able to see that it was a proclamation, printed in large type, which was the centre of attraction.

The paper was topped by the Imperial arms, and was couched in three languages, Polish, Russian, and German. Of the two former, I could, of course, comprehend nothing, but I was a tolerable proficient in the German tongue, and I soon discerned that a large reward was offered for the apprehension of a certain Ladislaus Jagellon, otherwise called Count Ladislaus Jagellon, who had escaped from the government of Irkutsk, in Siberia, where he was under sentence of perpetual exile, at the good will and merciful pleasure of our Sovereign Lord the Czar. Also of Marie, Countess Jagellon, wife of the above-mentioned contumacious traitor, who had escaped from the Greek convent where the merciful wisdom of the Emperor had placed her, and who was supposed to have been prompted and aided in this flight by her rebellious husband, himself a fugitive from justice. The two runaways were supposed to be lurking in the province of Radom, and while a large sum was offered for their betrayal, severe penalties were denounced against any who should shelter or conceal them.

How strange did all this appear to my English fancy, as I wended my way back to Chorzow! I could not doubt that this manifesto referred to the former owner of the ruined castle and noble demesne of Jagellon-Chorzow—to the son of the lonely old Countess who dwelt in poverty at Odrzypol, and whom I had often pitied. What a romance, methought, in this so-called prosaic nineteenth century of ours! I pictured to myself the resolution, the forethought, the desperate courage and endurance, that were exacted by such an escape as that of which the placard treated in dry official language. What a weary pilgrimage was that from Irkutsk, with all its perils from hunger and cold, savage beasts, and men as savage, the prowling Cossack and the surly Mongol! And the fugitive had not only eluded guards and pursuers, but had penetrated the Russian province where his young wife had been immured in some gloomy nunnery, and had contrived her escape as well as his own. It was impossible to help

admiring the daring and devotion of which this young man had given such signal proofs, and I sincerely trusted that the runaways might get safely out of the Muscovite dominions before the police could get a clue to their whereabouts.

"Poor fellow!" said I involuntarily, as my eye fell on the castle, through the shattered walls of which, draped in ivy and weeds, the beams of the rising moon poured wanly, "poor fellow! he has given up quite enough for the idea of a free Poland, without going back to heavier chains and more hopeless slavery. What a fine place that must have been some centuries back, that tower of the Jagellons!"

As I spoke, I started, for I saw a human form emerge from the brushwood and heaps of broken stonework that encumbered the verge of the dry moat, and I thought I recognized the tall figure of Michael. I called to him, but the overlooker made no reply, but instantly vanished in the brushwood, that came to within a stone's throw of the ruins. This incident somewhat surprised me, for although Michael and his brother lodged in a lonely farmhouse about a mile away, and the path to which lay through the wood, I could not account for his sudden appearance among the ruins. Work was long since over in the mine, and, besides, the shaft lay in open ground, much nearer to the hamlet. Could it be that he, too, had discovered the secret passage leading from the castle to the salt galleries? If so, it was strange that he, who was unaware of my discovery, should have kept the matter a mystery from me; and I could only account for this, by suspecting that my quiet overlooker had some concern in the contraband trade so general in South and West Poland.

"And that, after all, does not concern the Chorzow Salt Company," said I with a laugh, and dismissed the subject from my mind.

Three days passed, and on two of these I found time to pay a visit to my amusing American acquaintance, Dr. Twill. The latter was rapidly deriving benefit from the quinine, and felt so much better, that Thursday was fixed for the day of his descent into the salt mine. He was always chatty and agreeable, but I fancied that there were moments when he was restless and nervous; and especially when the quick tramp of a horse was heard on the rough pavement without, he would hurry to the window, and look sharply out from under his green shade, to see the cause of the commotion. He wrote a good deal, and was never weary of labelling and classifying his ores and chips of rock, but, as he somewhat piteously remarked, he was apt to find it a little dull at times, since he could speak no foreign tongue, save only a few words of execrably bad French, and there was no one in the town who knew a syllable of what he was pleased to call "American." I gathered from his discourse that he would have left the place long before, ill or well, but for the irresistible temptation presented by the salt mine.

On Wednesday, some troops, a detachment of the Moscow regiment of grenadiers, arrived at Odrzipol, and it was currently rumoured that their

coming was connected with the search for the fugitive Count and Countess of Jagellon. The latter were still at large, in spite of the efforts and threats of Government, and the people openly expressed their desire that the Russians might be baulked of their prey.

Naturally interested in the affair, which seemed to me to combine all the elements of a romance, I tried to obtain some further details from M. Bielski; but the worthy man had little to tell, and the mention of the subject appeared to annoy and distress him. For the first time, the kind priest seemed ill at ease in my society, and left me on the plea of pressing business. I concluded that his attachment to the Jagellon family rendered the topic a painful one.

Thursday came, and soon after breakfast arrived in a hired carriage Dr. Julius Twill, with his wallet and hammer, ready for the promised treat of exploring the mine. We descended the long ladders, followed and preceded by men with torches and lanterns, and from platform to platform gradually made our way into the depths of the vast excavation. It was a sight well worth some pains and toil. I had caused the principal halls and galleries to be illuminated with unusual brilliancy in honour of the expected visitor, and the walls and pillars of solid salt, white as snow, sparkled and flashed with crystalline splendour in the yellow glare of the flambeaux. As far as the eye could reach, there were caverns and chambers, all of the same dazzling purity, and these were crossed by a network of crevices and small passages, some of them lofty as the nave of a cathedral, others so narrow and low that the workmen had to enter them on hands and knees, pushing the baskets before them as they collected the salt.

There were other minor wonders to be pointed out, besides the mere glitter and extent of this underground realm, which was beautiful enough, in its strange way, to have been a palace for the king of the gnomes. There was the brine spring, which spouted from a rock, trickled over the rugged floor, and disappeared into a deep fissure. There were places where the salt, stained by metallic oxides, was yellow, crimson, brown, or of the brightest azure. And there were unexplored galleries, into which none dared venture, since, ages ago, according to tradition, workmen had rashly ventured in, never to return, and were supposed to have lost their way in some darksome labyrinth of interlaced passages. There were abysses of unknown depth, and piles of fallen salt and rock, under which it was reported that labourers, crushed by the sudden descent of some treacherous mass, lay entombed.

Dr. Julius Twill examined all these things, chipping and knocking off fragments of variously coloured salt and stone the while, with his ever ready hammer, and putting all sorts of questions; but I could not help fancying that his attention was elsewhere. He seemed distraught every now and then, answered at random, and appeared anxiously to listen for some sound which did not reach his ear. I, too, caught the infection of

uneasiness, and began to listen. And presently a faint sound, as of a bugle-note, came feebly echoing from afar. At that very instant, the geologist started, and passed his arm through mine, declaring himself tired, and that he thought he should like to return to upper air.

"You will take some refreshment first, surely," said I; "I have some lunch in readiness here, under Michael's charge;" and I beckoned to the overlooker, who could be seen at some distance, directing the efforts of a party of workmen. We were then in what was called the lesser hall of the mine, one end of which communicated with the immense excavation called the great hall, while on the left hand was the main shaft, and on the right the neglected gallery that led to the forgotten passage by which the castle could be reached. Michael came in obedience to my summons.

"Is the luncheon ready, Michael?" I began;—"Dr. Twill is——" when the words died away on my lips, as my geological guest, who had drawn a photograph from his pocket, and was apparently comparing it with the face of the overlooker, darted forward with surprising activity, and grasped Michael by the collar with his left hand, while with the right he drew a revolver from his bosom.

"My prisoner, in the Emperor's name!" said Dr. Julius Twill, in perfectly pure French, and wholly abandoning his usual drawling tone. Almost at the same instant a heavy tramping of many feet reached my ear, and a party of Russian soldiers with fixed bayonets appeared, blocking up the gallery that led to the main shaft. The miners gave a shout of anger and alarm, and several of them ran forward, brandishing crowbars and iron shovels, as if to resist the hated Muscovites, but were cowed by the numbers of armed men who came rapidly crowding down the ladders. All this occurred so abruptly, and was so utterly incomprehensible, that I was dumb with surprise. Michael, who had been passive for a moment, suddenly started back, and freed himself from his captor's grasp with a violence that hurled the latter against a pillar, then bounded away like a deer in the direction of the secret passage. Two muskets were fired as he ran, but Dr. Twill shouted forth some Russian words; the soldiers desisted, and in the next moment a scuffle was heard, and the thrilling scream of a despairing woman's voice, and a score of grenadiers emerged from the secret passage, dragging with them two prisoners, Michael, bare-headed, bleeding, and with his wrists chained together, and Paul, who broke loose from the soldiers, rushed forward and knelt before me, supplicating me, in heartbroken accents, and in good French, to "Save Ladislaus! to save her dear husband!"

I felt like one in a dream. The voice was a woman's, the slender form at my feet was a woman's, though the hair had been cut short, and the brilliant complexion disguised by some dye or wash, visible enough now, in the full glare of the torches. By this time Michael had approached, and, holding out his fettered arms, said, with a reproachful look, "I have not deserved this, sir, at *your* hands."

I stammered out something, I know not what, expressive of my utter ignorance of the fact which now dawned upon me for the first time, that my clever foreman and his weakly brother were no other than the hunted fugitives, Ladislaus, Count Jagellon, and the young Countess. As for the *soi-disant* Dr. Twill, he very coolly pulled off the green shade that had covered a pair of eyes as keen and cruel as those of a rat, and with ironical politeness begged to introduce himself as Baron Nikoloff, major in the Imperial service, and *sous-chef* of the secret police.

I was bidden to consider myself a prisoner, but was mockingly assured that my detention was a mere matter of form, and that I should be forgiven for my offence in harbouring refugees, so soon as the Government should learn that but for my communicativeness with regard to the secret passage, the fugitives would probably be still at large.

I pass over the painful scene that ensued,—the sobs and cries of the poor young wife, who clung screaming to her husband, and could only be separated from him by force; the jeers of the villanous spy who had so completely outwitted me; the Count's scornful look of incredulity as I eagerly assured him that I neither suspected his identity nor that of the false geologist; and the curses and menacing looks of the furious Poles who gathered around, and who had heard enough to make them consider me as the betrayer of their young lord, a gallant Polish patriot, whose secret they had faithfully kept, in spite of bribe and threat.

It was a relief when we were led away to separate places of confinement at Odrzipol. During the fortnight which I spent in a narrow chamber in the house of the captain of gendarmerie, I had ample leisure to reflect on my own gullibility, and the crafty treachery of the scoundrel who had wound himself into my confidence only to use me as an instrument. I never saw him again, but I afterwards heard that although a Russian by birth, he had been long a resident in America as well as in other countries, and by talent and practice could imitate the peculiarities of the natives as well as could be done by the most versatile actor. He was esteemed as one of the most valuable sleuthhounds of the police, and had in this case been lured by the desire of a large reward to seek the runaways in a district where, of all others, they were most likely to find a refuge.

Nor did I ever learn the fate of the unfortunate young couple whose recapture had, most unwillingly, been accomplished through my means. Indeed, my stay in Poland was brief, for although I was soon at liberty, I found myself a marked man, denounced as the Judas who had given up to the Russian butchers the victims they sought; and even M. Bielski refused to believe my innocence, while the old Countess publicly accused me of being the cause of her son's slavery or death. As for the miners, they were so furious against me that I was warned not to trust myself among them, even for a day. I therefore was forced to resign my situation, and to quit Poland, heavier in heart and lighter in purse than when I first entered on my post as manager of the great Chorzow salt mine.

STRAWS IN THE STREAM.

NO. IV.—THE STRAWS UPON A MODEL FARM.

It may be philosophical, but it is scarcely pleasant, to reflect that there is nothing that we eat or drink that has not, at some previous time, passed through the stomach of some animal or other. This is a philosophical truth, which may be easily demonstrated even to the meanest capacity. The entire bulk of the earth is but a given and invariable quantity, and the greater portion of the human race lives upon its surface. The earth neither diminishes nor increases, and there is nothing upon the earth that is destroyed. If it were possible to weigh the earth, it would be found that there had not been the variation of an ounce in the space of ten thousand years, or ten times ten thousand. It is quite clear, therefore, that the articles we consume are not destroyed, they are merely passing through an imaginary circle, and undergoing separation, to be reproduced again in their combination. Nay, it were not to reason too closely to say that every member of the human race has passed and will pass through the same process. It was true scientific reasoning, as well as philosophy, which prompted Hamlet when he said,—

“The Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.”

The wine we drink to-day may have graced the tables of Sardanapalus, although it has not been wine through every epoch since, seeing that it is of the vintage of three or four years ago. The elements that are the component parts of that wine existed then and long before; but they have passed through channels since that time, before they percolated the plains of Epernay, which it is needless to attempt to trace. But those elements were as unchangeable and as unreduceable as the golden vessels which sparkle in the legends of Nineveh in its prime.

There is a small estate down in Essex, upon which, day by day, by the appliances of art, the natural process of a thousand years is almost made palpable to the eye. Some five-and-twenty years ago, Mr. Alderman Mechi purchased this estate of a hundred and seventy acres, when it was little better than a desert waste. It was difficult of approach by foot, and almost impassable by the means of any ordinary vehicle; for where it was not sand and gravel to the very surface, it was a bog; and altogether it presented as uninviting a spot as could well be conceived, even by a denizen of the Essex marshes. That spot is now a rich landscape, variegated by crops of agricultural produce, richer and heavier than those of the delta of the Nile; and in the centre rises an attractive residential hall, in front of which is a velvety lawn, and which is approached by a carriage-way as smooth as Regent Street, and lined on either side

with rows of laurels and evergreens; while in the rear of the house are pleasure grounds and fruit gardens, through which flows, what I suppose was in former years the main element of the bog, in the shape of an ornamental piece of water, thickly populated by the finny tribe, and clear as crystal to its very depths. Mr. Alderman Mechi is proud, as well he may be, of this salutary change that he has produced, and he is looked upon by all his neighbours round as a real lord of the soil, which he has subdued to his will. He is a great revolutionist in the land, and he recognizes no traditions.

It is an annual custom with Mr. Mechi to invite the *cognoscenti* of the agricultural world to visit him when all his heavy crops are rich around him, with the intent that they may see and examine what his practical system is, and in the hope that they themselves may be induced to follow it. Although I do not rank myself amongst the agricultural *cognoscenti* of the land, yet was I favoured this year with an invitation by the worthy alderman, and a right pleasant day I spent upon the domain. There was, however, something this year besides the attraction of the farm itself, for the alderman had organized a fancy fair and bazaar in aid of the building fund of a new school, that is now in course of construction for the improvement of the rising generation of the hamlet. A gigantic tent had been erected on the lawn in front of the house, and in this the bazaar was held, the stalls thereof being presided over by the leading ladies of the district; and attached to this gigantic tent was another of much smaller dimensions, in which tables were laid out after the manner of the suttling tents at Epsom on the Derby day, by the means of which the alderman practised an amiable delusion upon himself. There was a charge of two-and-sixpence each for admission to this suttling tent, the receipts to be applied to the aforesaid school-building fund; but seeing that the whole of the viands and liquids which adorned the long tables in that suttling tent were gratuitously provided by the alderman himself, it was he only who contributed to the fund, because every person who paid his half-crown had much more than his money's worth in return. It was quite a sight to see those tables so furnished by the alderman, to say nothing of those who sat thereat in the course of the day. Everything that was on the table had been grown upon the estate, with the exception of the salmon, which is not at present among the products of the Tiptree Farm, although high farming may, perhaps, in future years, include the production of salmon itself. We have seen salmon produced from the ova by artificial means in the window of the office of the *Field* newspaper,—then why may it not be made part of the produce of a model farm? Yes, everything upon those tables, except the salmon, was of home produce from the Tiptree Estate, and had been fattened and cooked on the estate. There were mighty dishes of roast and boiled beef, surloins and rounds, such as the stalwart beef-eaters of Henry the Eighth's time—when the Tower was in its glory—used, in the morning about breakfast-time, to stay their stomachs with; and there was that kind

of ale with which they were wont to wash the layers of beef down their capacious throats. There were saddles of mutton and haunches of mutton, plump in the brown richness of being "done to a turn;" and there were huge meat pies ornamenting the tables, as a relief to the dishes of unadorned viands, and which were speedily found to be a relief in another sense. But Mr. Mechi would very speedily cease to be a prosperous farmer upon scientific principles, if for any length of time he had to supply that tent at half-a-crown a head to those whom I saw eating on the occasion of my visit. How they did eat, those Essex agriculturists! It was wondrous to see those massive piles of beef and mutton melt, as it were, away beneath their prowess; and as they quaffed long draughts of prime October, they sighed with unctuous sound that eloquently spoke of solid satisfaction. This was the priming they considered necessary prior to their going off on a tour of inspection round the farm, in order to the understanding and the study of Mr. Mechi's system. This priming having been completed, the alderman announced that our cicerone, who was to conduct us round the farm, was ready, and he was thereupon introduced to us, under the most appropriate name of Drain. First of all, Mr. Drain conducted us through the cattle-sheds, the most striking portion of which, to me, appeared the one containing about five-and-twenty calves, of very tender age and with exceedingly frisky tails. The floor of their apartment—which was about the size of one of the committee-rooms of the House of Commons—was perforated, or rather was composed of longitudinal iron bars, in order that it might be cleansed by a hose and force-pump from beneath, so that while their room was cleaned out, these calves enjoyed the luxury of a bath at the same time. I understood from Mr. Drain that they were constantly kept in this shed, and they seemed to enjoy their confinement, for they were very frisky, and were undoubtedly in fine condition. From the cattle-sheds we proceeded to the meal and fodder rooms, and thence to the engine-room, the machinery of which does not differ from any other engine-room; and then we came to the farm itself, which was the real show of the day. Just outside the engine-house we came to a tumulus of about sixty feet in circumference, on the top of which was what had the appearance of a small gallows. This tumulus was covered with grass of a very luxuriant description, which made the ascent to the top pleasant and easy. In the centre of the crown were two traps or folding-doors underneath the gallows-looking apparatus. Our confidant and guide, Mr. Drain, took his station on the top of the mound, surrounded by the general company, and having opened the folding-doors at his feet, there issued forth a volume of steam, charged with a hot, stewey, seething odour, which, though not absolutely sickening, was not nice, or such as the generality of people, with ordinary tastes, would like to indulge in. From his vantage-ground at the side of the mouth of this odoriferous crater, Mr. Drain delivered a descriptive lecture upon the mystery of the depths beneath. From his description I gathered that we

were standing upon the great manure reservoir of the establishment, which, certainly, from its position, construction, and contents, might have done admirably for the witches' cauldron in "Macbeth."

Mr. Drain informed us that this tank is 39 feet by 29 feet, and that it holds a hundred and twenty thousand gallons of liquid. Into this cauldron everything that is decaying, decomposed, and nasty that can be collected on the farm is thrown; but as this would not be enough for the purposes to which the tank is applied, the putrescent horrors of thickly-peopled localities are accumulated,

"To make the gruel thick and slab,"

and all the washings from the bullocks, the calves, and the pigs are carefully preserved in this cauldron. If a bullock comes to an untimely end, it is thrust into the cauldron. If a cat is confined of nine kittens, and it is only necessary to keep one, the remaining eight are immolated in the cauldron; and if the antony pig of a litter should not long survive his birth, his delicate pork flavours the "gruel" that the witches speak of. In fact, every decomposing abomination that can be obtained is treasured in this seething cauldron; and I have no doubt that Mr. Alderman Mechi would gladly welcome the three witches, and entertain them well; and I am sure he would be delighted to dance about the tumulus, and sing with them,—

"Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under coldest stone,
Days and nights hast thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot!
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake:
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and owl's wing."

And then they might add,—

Sewage from the Board of Works,
Where each abomination lurks;
Guano pour into the well,
With Eau de Thames, of fearful smell;
Hideous scraps that the gorge rouses,
Collected at cheap eating-houses,
For a charm rich crops to double,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

Mr. Drain explained to us that when all these ingredients are thrown into the cauldron, a current of air is forced into it from the bottom, by which decomposition is facilitated, and a thick unctuous liquid is pro-

duced, having something of the appearance of double stout, as far as colour goes ; and into the reeking mass a jet of steam is passed, which prevents it settling. As Mr. Drain felicitously expressed it, "it is like an enormous cup of coffee that is full of grounds ; unless you keep stirring of it, the grounds is apt to settle at the bottom of the wessel." Mr. Drain cared more about the force than the fashion of his words. Well, he went on to explain to us that the witches' cauldron requires a constant, uninterrupted supply of water during the day-time of one hundred gallons a minute, and as the natural drainage of the surrounding lands only gives forty gallons per minute, the water is husbanded or accumulated in a pond during the night, and so the required hundred gallons per minute are obtained during the day-time.

Having thoroughly enjoyed the fumes of the cauldron—and some of the party really did appear to sniff at it with a gusto that indicated real enjoyment—Mr. Drain explained to us that a main drain pipe is carried from the tank cauldron, about a hundred yards, to a cast-iron dome-shaped head about three feet above the ground, and about three feet in circumference ; and in this cast-iron dome, or "this 'ere wessel," as Mr. Drain forcibly designated it, the foul air from the cauldron accumulates, and produces a pressure which much assists the irrigating process. From this spot iron pipes are carried over the whole farm, as the gas-pipes under the streets are ; and upon every eleven acres there is a stand-pipe, to which, when it is required, a hose is fixed, and an agricultural labourer holds it in his hand just as a fireman would the hose of a fire-engine, and plays the liquid from the cauldron over the eleven acres, the steam-engine supplying the force for expelling the liquid. I had an opportunity of observing the *modus operandi*, for during the tour of inspection a couple of men were employed in playing upon a field of Italian rye grass. Our guide informed us that this was the fifth crop of the year, and although the grass then was only of nine days' growth, it was ten or twelve inches in height. This certainly demonstrates very forcibly the value of liquid manure applied in this manner, its great advantage being that it reaches the roots immediately, and is utilized afterwards in future crops by the system of sub-soil ploughing.

This suggests the question that is now being discussed and anxiously considered in the metropolis with regard to town sewage and its uses. The renowned chemist, Justus von Liebig, has recently published an interesting and most important letter on the subject, in which he says,—

"It seems to me that on the whole people have not a correct idea of the matter. In the last twenty years a new branch of industry, which did not before exist, has developed itself on a large scale ; and in like manner the importation of guano, and the sale of various manures, have increased to an enormous extent. The manufacturers of and dealers in manure are on principle inimical to the utilisation of sewage, and in the battle which is being fought they constitute the inimical army whose forces should be on no account underrated."

He, however, shows conclusively that the interests of the manufacturers of artificial manures will be vastly increased by an extended use of town sewage. He says that the manufacture of artificial manure is based on the doctrine that the nourishment of all cultivated plants consists of inorganic or mineral substances. Manure, consisting of organic substances, can only be produced by agriculturists. The Professor is of opinion that the most important artificial manure is superphosphate of lime, and he adds :—

“The question of immediate importance to be decided is the value to the farmer of the sewage used, and it is easy to find this by comparing sewage matter with guano, the effects and price of which are known to the farmer, and of whose value he is able to judge. The problem to be solved is, therefore, how much of the efficient elements of guano a farmer can convey to his field in a ton of sewage, or how many gallons of sewer water are equivalent to 1 cwt. of guano. Regarding the component parts of the best sorts of guano, we have certain and reliable data.”

He then makes the following calculations :—

“I reckon that Peruvian guano contains 14 per cent. of nitrogen, 17 per cent. of ammonia, 12 per cent. of phos. acid. and 6-10ths per cent. of potash. Professor Way analyzed the water of two sewers—one in Dorset Square, and the other in Barrett's Court—and found in one gallon of sewer water,—

	Barrett's Court.	Dorset Square.
Ammonia	- - 41.18 grains	- - 17.96 grains.
Phos. acid	- - 10.44 „	- - 4.17 „
Potash	- - 48.18 „	- - 3.32 „

“The difference in the contents of the two sewers is very great, for the first contains 29 more ammonia and phos. acid, and nearly 15 times as much potash as the other. According to the analyses of Dr. Hoffman, Frankland, and others, I am of opinion that I may take the contents of the Dorset Square sewer water as the average standard for my calculations. From the above figures it results that 101 tons (20,200 gallons) of this sewer water contains the same amount of phos. acid, more than three times as much ammonia, and 16 times as much potash as 1 cwt. of the best Peruvian guano. It will be observed that there is a great difference in the proportion of phos. acid to ammonia in guano and sewer water. In guano this proportion is six parts of phos. acid to eight and a half parts of ammonia. In sewer water this proportion is six parts of phos. acid to 26 parts of ammonia. The reason of this disproportion in the amount of phos. acid and ammonia in sewer water is at once perceived, if we remember that the bones of the slaughtered animals do not find their way into the sewers ; these bones are, however, the manuring matter in which phos. acid abounds, and their component parts, let it be well understood, must be given back to the fields, if it be intended that the soil shall retain its fertility. Potash and ammonia are, according to their price, far more costly manures than phosphates, and in many cases quite as necessary for the field as this latter can be. Potash and ammonia are wholly inefficient and useless without the presence of phos. acid, but, with the addition of phosphate, they become efficient and valuable. The manufacturer of manure is not able to supply potash and ammonia to the farmer in sufficient quantity, and at an available price ; but it is easy for him to collect the bones, and make up the deficiency of phosphate, by drawing it from natural sources. It will, I think, be now perceptible what connection there is between the manufacture of superphosphate and the utilization of sewage. If the farmer adds to the sewer water the phosphate

which is wanting in it, the efficiency of the water will be increased thus :—101 of sewer water, to which 120 lbs. of superphosphate have been added, are equivalent to 305 lbs. of Peruvian guano ; and the value of the sewer water will be—305 lbs. of guano at £13 12s. 6d. per ton = 498 pence. From this subtract the price of 120 lbs. of superphosphate, at £5 5s. per ton, = 76 pence, which gives the value of 101 tons of sewer water = 422 pence, or 4d. for one ton of sewer water.

"We may conclude that 42 tons of ammonia, 10 phos. acid, and seven and a half of potash, find their way into London sewers daily.

"These 42 tons of ammonia are contained in 247 tons of guano 247
The 10 tons of phos. acid in 83·3

Guano 163·7 tons.

Thus 163·7 tons remain in which the phos. acid is wanting, or, which is the same thing, if to the sewage obtained daily from London 100 tons of superphosphate of lime (at 20 per cent. of phos. acid) be added, the value of the daily voidings of the metropolis in the sewage of London is made equivalent to 247 tons of Peruvian guano, or by the addition yearly of 36,500 tons of superphosphate, we may acquire the value of 90,155 tons guano at £13 12s. 6d. per ton - - £1,228,364

Deduct the price of 36,800 tons of superphosphate at
£5 5s. per ton 191,628

Balance - £1,036,736

which is the money value of the sewage."

This is the amount of solid money that is every year literally thrown down the gutter in London alone. But this is not the only loss, for Professor Liebig asserts that

"Great Britain is large enough, if we take the arable surface of the land, to produce all the corn and meat necessary for its inhabitants ; and it is neither fantastic nor ridiculous to suppose that, without purchasing foreign manure, and by a judicious utilization of the sewage of towns and villages, England would be able to dispense with the importation of food from abroad. For her it would be a blessing if the application of capital to agriculture were found sufficiently profitable to create speculation in this direction, so that the industrial population, manufacturer and tradesman, might devote themselves to the production of bread and meat. These men are quite of another stamp to the present farmers, and care little for tradition or the authority of custom. They know their multiplication table, however, and in competition with such men the farmers would find it impossible to persevere in their old jog-trot ways. The change thus brought about would be as great as after a revolution."

It is this change that Mr. Alderman Mechi, by example, is seeking to produce. It seems that the cost of laying down the feed-pipes over the land is £5 an acre. Unquestionably, if ever comparisons were "odorous," they must be so in this case ; and so I suppose Mr. Drain thought ; for after we had seen the irrigating process, he wished us to compare a standing crop of oats on a piece of land of twelve acres and a half, cultivated under Mr. Mechi's system, and a crop on an equal extent of land belonging to a neighbour, and which joined that of Mr. Mechi. The contrast was undoubtedly marked, and Mr. Drain favoured us with another pro-

fessional lecture. He informed us that Mr. Mechi took this piece of land twenty years ago, on lease at 20s. an acre, and he said that the value now was 50s. an acre, although the adjoining land had remained at the value of twenty years ago. Mr. Drain then gave us some statistical comparisons, commencing six years before the present one. The yield of a crop of beans the first year on the twelve and a half acres adjoining was nine quarters and a half, while that of Mr. Mechi's was sixty quarters. The following year Mr. Mechi obtained twelve sacks of wheat per acre, while the adjoining land only produced three. The succeeding season yielded ten sacks of barley to Mr. Mechi, and three only to his neighbour. The following year Mr. Mechi obtained tares, succeeded by turnips, while the "neighbour" lay fallow. This season the two pieces are both under oats, as I have said, and the yield is estimated by Mr. Drain at ten to four in favour of Mr. Mechi. During these six years it seems that Mr. Mechi's land was manured with guano at a cost of 28s. per acre, while the neighbouring land was manured with fish at a cost of £3 per acre. The liquid manure is distributed over the grass land and mangolds only.

Mr. Alderman Mechi's principle and his system are deep drainage, the use of liquid manure, and subsoil ploughing. Some of the drains on the farm are at a depth of seven feet below the surface, and in no case, I believe, is the depth less than five feet, and the distance between them varies from twenty to forty feet. His ploughing goes to the depth of fourteen inches, so that all the manure that previously, by the agency of the pipes and hose, has been put upon the land when under grass, is again brought to the surface, and thus the land is cultivated for four or five successive years without manuring, the manure it has already received through the grass being sufficient for the succeeding crops.

Thus, then, does Mr. Alderman Mechi exemplify the proposition with which I started, and his demonstration is a very interesting one. With regard to his wheat crops, Mr. Mechi follows the theory of selection, or what may be called "breed." The wheat is treated as a plant, and as such is sown thinly at first, so that every single seed may be fully developed. At the commencement the largest head in a sheaf is selected, and the largest grain in that head is planted, and by this plan the increase appears to be enormous. Mr. Mechi says that farmers hitherto have been satisfied if one out of every three seeds fructifies; whereas, under his plan of selection, or breed of what is technically called pedigree wheat, he obtains commonly fifty or sixty ears.

I came away from Tiptree Hall after having spent a really delightful day, for undoubtedly instruction and amusement had been pleasantly blended. I had fully enjoyed the glories of the country during the golden harvest time, for the straws that were waving in that stream—rolling in golden waves beneath a deliciously tempering breeze—were interesting to contemplate indeed.

MUST BE SOLD.

"Must be sold. Amazing opportunity! Owing to a fortuitous concatenation of circumstances, a most valuable property, consisting of lucrative mines, a good and commodious mansion, with garden, orchard, pasture, arable, and woodland, total of three hundred and seventy acres, in the loveliest county of Pennsylvania, U.S., to be sold for a fraction of its worth. Rail, road, river (canalized), and water privilege. Annual yield of mines increasing. Upset price fifteen thousand dollars. Estimate of property to pay eleven per cent. at lowest. Early application to Messrs. Pell and Facey, Fourth Block, Constitution Street, Toronto."

"There, George," said my wife, as she read the above tempting advertisement aloud to me and the children, and then turned her face, flushed with pleasure and excitement, towards myself—"there, George, I don't think you will say in future that no good ever came from the study of a local newspaper. Why, eleven per cent. is twice as much as our money produces now in those Canada Sixes you made such a fuss about. Our fortunes are made, George,—and a commodious mansion too, where we could live rent free, with gardens, and a farm, and—" Here I broke in with some prudent and deprecatory remark, such as became the father of a family, who, in middle age, was about, with but scanty means, to commence an entirely new mode of life. It was not without long debate and many misgivings that our emigration had been decided upon. So far as Louisa and I were concerned, I think that no considerations of possible prosperity across the Atlantic would have induced us to disserve ourselves from long-formed ties and habits, and to leave old England for ever. For the children's sake this was done, but it cost many a pang to wrench ourselves free from the associations and scenes of our youth; and our voyage to Quebec, and subsequent journey to Toronto, Canada West, though a holiday trip to Willy and his sisters, was a painful pilgrimage to me.

The sale of my practice (I was a physician of some standing, but with no very profitable connection, in the south of England), added to the disposal of our household furniture, had produced three thousand and a few hundred pounds. The latter would suffice, with careful management, for all the manifold expenses of travelling and settling in our new home, wherever that might be; but the three thousand formed my only capital, and the sole inheritance, save health and an honest name, of my children. To invest this small sum in such a manner as should unite security with an ample rate of interest was of course my chief anxiety, as it has been that of many a Paterfamilias before me. We had come out to the colony with the same crude idea of buying land and making a fortune out of farm produce that has allured so many settlers to Canada and the States. But before we had been long in the province, we discovered that to farm

Canadian land at a high profit required qualifications which a middle-aged physician could hardly unite—money, and skill in agriculture. To be sure, any strong and industrious man could get a living out of the ground, on the one condition of sobriety, but our aspirations went beyond bare subsistence.

As yet, no advantageous opening had presented itself. Money in a new country is in as high a demand as labour itself, and I could have got nine or ten per cent. for my cash on mortgage easily enough, and with tolerable safety. But I had no wish that my children should grow up listless idlers, and I accordingly looked out for some channel in which energy and dollars were equally requisite.

We had been some months in Canada, and nothing of a satisfactory nature had turned up, when my wife happened to light upon the advertisement which I have quoted above, conspicuously printed in the columns of the *Toronto Gazette*. Its discovery led to a long discussion,—my wife, whose sanguine disposition had endowed her with a turn for castle-building of a character more or less substantial, being eager to secure the prize, and I feeling it my duty to speak cautiously, and to remind my hearers that all is not gold that glitters, especially in advertisements. But they were all against me,—my wife, who declared that when fortune knocked at the door, it would be the act of a simpleton to deny admittance to the bountiful visitant; Lucy and Florence, because they were weary of roaming, and longed to be settled with their own flowers, cows, and pets of all sorts, feathered or four-footed, about them; and Willy, whose dreams were of the rifle and canoe, and who was panting for forest sports, salmon-fishing and deer-stalking—attractive pursuits to a boy who had shot or hooked nothing but English sparrows and English perch. It is not very surprising that the united efforts of my nearest and dearest should conquer my self-imposed caution, or that I should humour my wife so far as to step out and pay a call to Messrs. Pell and Facey that very day, lest others, as Louisa forcibly put it, should snap up the golden morsel before it could be secured for ourselves.

“I shall be very prudent in this matter, however,” said I, with as much severity as I could assume, taking up my hat and gloves. “I shall take nothing for granted; and unless proof be forthcoming that the statements of these gentlemen are strictly accurate, I shall most certainly decline to have anything to do with the business. It becomes us, as strangers in the land, to be doubly careful of the many pitfalls always prepared by unscrupulous persons to ensnare the unwary. You remember, Louisa, what young Mr. Lee said when he warned us against the specious professions of Yankee projectors, and—”

“I *wish* you would not speak of that Mr. Lee, George. He was a most forward and presuming young man, and I would rather forget that he had ever forced his acquaintance upon us,” interrupted my wife, in a tone of unusual petulance; and I noticed that my eldest daughter’s

bright, pleasant face became suddenly overclouded, and that she looked down at the work in her lap with quivering eyelashes and something excessively like a sigh. I went out, blaming my own forgetfulness for having mentioned a name that never failed to ruffle Louisa's ordinarily cheerful temper. If the dear soul had a fault, it was that of being ambitious on her girls' account; and there was no match, in her estimation, too brilliant or splendid for their deserts.

The head and front of Mr. Lee's offending may be briefly stated. Henry Lee had been among the cabin passengers in the steamer which conveyed us to Quebec, and a sort of intimacy had sprung up during the voyage. He was indeed a fine young fellow, clever and expert in his profession, yet of most unassuming and modest demeanour. We had all of us liked him well, until my wife perceived that there was risk of an attachment springing up between the young engineer and our eldest girl, Lucy. I had never seen my wife so angry. Whether she expected Lucy to marry a governor-general or a president I cannot say, but she was as indignant at the idea of her daughter's throwing herself away on "a mere surveyor," as if I had been an earl instead of an M.D. So strong were Mrs. Bradley's feelings on the subject, that, to my great reluctance and Lucy's secret sorrow, the acquaintance with young Lee came to an abrupt finish, and his very name was understood to be a forbidden word in our family circle.

I regretted what had occurred, for I liked the lad, and felt vexed that any slight should have been shown to him. We had received a good many little attentions at his hands early in the voyage, for he was familiar with the steam-packets and the Atlantic passage, and knew America almost as well as England. Indeed, he was then on his way to fulfil an engagement on the staff of the Great Trunk of Canada line, since, young as he was, he was well thought of by the railway authorities; and had my own wishes been consulted exclusively, Lee would have been a son-in-law after my own heart. He had given me several shrewd hints with reference to American ways, cautioning me in especial against the plausible language of professional speculators, though, as he good-humouredly said, it seemed "presumptuous in him to give warnings to a gentleman of my worldly experience."

Inwardly revolving the young surveyor's warning as I approached the office of Messrs. Pell and Facey, I resolved to be completely on my guard. The office was a handsome one, with plate-glass window and bright mahogany fittings; and the painted words "Pell and Facey; and at Philadelphia," were fresh and glistening over the half-open door. It was hot weather, and the green sun-blinds threw a welcome shade upon the interior of the building. For a moment I hesitated, with my hand upon the burnished knocker, and experienced a singular but involuntary impulse to turn on my heel and make the best of my way home again. Crushing this impulse as a mere tremor of the nerves, I gave a moderately loud

succession of raps, which in due time brought out a negro boy in a suit of pink and white cotton, rubbing his drowsy eyes, and evidently just awakened from an afternoon nap.

"Are Messrs. Pell and Facey disengaged?" asked I of this sable servant, who stood goggling his saucer-like eyes at me, and grinning as only negroes can grin.

"Mas'r Hieronimus Pell," returned the boy, pronouncing the long christian name of his employer very slowly, and with a painful effort, that told of severe trials to commit so many syllables to memory—"Mas'r Hieronimus Pell, he in dar," pointing with his dusky thumb over his shoulder towards the shadowy interior.

"Show the gentleman in, you darned dilatory snowball, ef you'd keep clear of cowhide," called out a high, shrill voice; and the boy, whose recollections of Southern bondage probably overpowered the sense of being in a country where white and black are equal, made haste to introduce me into his employer's presence, and to accommodate me with a chair.

Mr. Hieronimus Pell was tall and rawboned, with the angular form, dark complexion, restless eyes, and forest of black hair falling on the collar of his glossy, crumpled coat, that so many of his countrymen possess. His black satin vest was crossed and re-crossed by a meandering river of gold watch-chain, with nuggets appended as "charms;" there were rings glittering on his more than half-dirty hands; and, from his diamond scarf-pin to his varnished boots, he was dressed with expensive slovenliness. But there was no disputing that his face was that of an intelligent man, and he received me urbanely enough.

My business was soon explained, and Mr. Pell's flexible features were darkened by a frown, while his lips were screwed up to an ominous tightness, when he heard that I had called in consequence of the advertisement.

"That was Facey's doing," said he, irritably flinging away the stump of his cigar. "If there's a commercial man in America that doesn't know how to keep from blurting everything abroad, it's J. B. Facey. Some thousand dollars lost to the firm, that's all. But he *will* do it."

And for a minute or so Mr. Pell kept silence, viciously digging his penknife into the polished mahogany desk at which he sat, and thus with silent eloquence expressing his deep disgust at the inconvenient openness of his junior partner.

"If I am intruding, or if the advertisement was inserted by mistake," I began, picking up my hat and preparing to depart; but Mr. Pell broke in with,—

"No, sir, by no means; no, Dr. Bradley, you shall not go away and say that Pell and Facey have used you ill, and sneaked out of their published engagements. We will be as good as our word, sir; and if my partner, who is young and hasty, has chosen to cackle about the golden eggs, why, so much the better for those who secure them. We air no

double-tongued, equivocating scamps, Britisher, and I'll just show you how the land lies."

Mr. Pell's exposition was lucid and very satisfactory. The property had but very recently passed into the possession of the present owner, who had inherited it from an elderly relative. This present owner, General the Hon. Hiram Flake, lived in Paris, was wealthy and extravagant, and preferred a small sum of ready cash to large prospective profits, especially as he had no intention of returning to America for some years. He had written to his agents, Messrs. Pell and Facey, desiring them to sell the estate, and naming a price which those gentlemen could not help stigmatizing as ridiculous. They were at their Toronto office when the General's letter was forwarded to them from the head establishment in Philadelphia, and Mr. Facey had forthwith paid a visit to the property, which he had minutely inspected. On his return, and just before setting off for the Quaker capital, Mr. Facey had, without consulting his senior partner, dashed off the advertisement in question, and Mr. Pell had first seen it, much to his annoyance, in the columns of the Toronto paper.

"General Hiram Flake, sir," pursued Mr. Pell, in a lofty tone, "is patrimonially a wealthy man, and one of the most distinguished members of our citizen aristocracy. He is much courted, sir, in the saloons of the nobility of Europe, and his lovely and accomplished daughters air considered the chief ornaments of the gilded Tuileries. Such a man cares little for mining property, which, as you air aware, requires the owner's eye. Get me a pitiful fifteen thousand dollars, says the General, and let who will have the land. And now, sir, you air wondering in your sleeve, why don't Pell and Facey keep the plunder for home consumption. I'll tell you. Try a cigar—real Cuba. Hev a glass of liquor? Now I'll tell you." And here Mr. Pell became very confidential and frank, plainly telling me that the capital of the firm was "locked up" in a number of speculations, and that they could not, without great loss, withdraw any of their multifarious irons from the fire. However, at the very time of my entry Mr. Pell was maturing a project for raising the necessary funds by some arrangement with an Albany bank, when I came in and nipped the project in the bud.

I propounded a few questions, the answers to which were prompt and convincing. The title-deeds were on the agents' premises. My lawyer was welcome to peruse them. The land had been duly mapped out, and there was a certificate of its extent signed by the State surveyor. Blossburg was the nearest town, but the Susquehannah was within easy reach; there was a creek that would float flats or broadhorns; roads were of the best class of the "corduroy" kind, and a railway was accessible. The house was old, but in good repair, and the orchard yielded cider and sweet apples enough for the largest family. As for the land,—

"Fifty-eight acres of arable,—stony ground, but fit for buckwheat, potatoes, and maize; ninety-three acres of tolerable pasture, stumps and

roots removed by spade and fire; the rest rough woodland,—hickory, dwarf pine, shrubs, and sugar maple. The last proprietor made a good many barrels of maple sugar, worth seven cents a pound in the gross."

I next inquired about the mines. What were the mineral products of the soil? To this the answer was equally satisfactory.

"Mines air iron, sir, *and* plumbago. Carbonate and hematite of iron both, the former very productive and of good quality, but the working has been greatly neglected. The late owner, Dr. Bradley, was a farmer, but not a business man,—a timid, ignorant old individual, who contented himself with scratching up a little of the surface ore when farm work was scanty. He might have sold a thousand tons where he sold one, and never exhausted the mine. Don't take my word for it. These papers here, reports from competent surveyors, estimate the yield at something very considerable. The plumbago lies deeper, but the veins are good, and the quality superior. Here's a sample," continued Mr. Pell, reaching down two small papers full of a black, glistening powder; "and beside it is a selected specimen from Bustletown mine, reckoned the best in Pennsylvania. To my eye, this whips Bustletown."

I need not dwell on the events of the three following days. My wife and children were enraptured with the delightful windfall that had dropped at our feet, and I was scarcely less excited. I retained, however, sufficient prudence to require that the title-deeds should be examined by a respectable lawyer in Toronto. Also I contrived to beat down the price of the estate to thirteen thousand dollars, though with some difficulty, and not without vehement resistance on the agents' part. However, I remembered that a command of capital had always been reckoned indispensable in mining operations, and I was so firmly resolved to set aside four hundred pounds for preliminary expenses, that Mr. Pell at last gave way.

"I congratulate you, sir," said he, shaking my hand in conclusion of the bargain; "and I wish you joy of your purchase. You deserve it, for you know the early buzzard picks up the snake, as the proverb says, and your quick application alone secured possession of Creek Blue property. This very morning, sir, I've had a dozen letters from different capitalists on this very subject, but your claim took precedence."

Before this agreeable termination of the affair, Mr. Smylie, the Toronto solicitor, had handed me back the papers, saying rather drily that they appeared correct in all particulars, but that if he might presume to advise, I had better see the property before paying for it.

Mr. Pell was much too polite, as well as too straightforward in all his dealings, to object to this precaution on my part, and he at once proposed a plan by which all difficulties might be disposed of. His own numerous engagements would preclude his accompanying me to Creek Blue, but I should be provided with an introduction to a most respectable resident, one of my future neighbours, Elder Jonathan Kinder. The Elder would kindly show me the mines and farm lands, and in case I was satisfied that

I had been fairly dealt with, I could pay the purchase-money to him, receiving from his hands the deed of sale and other titles of possession, which Mr. Pell would send to him for that purpose. If I chose, I might inhabit the house on the estate while making up my mind, and Mr. Pell had no doubt that the Elder would "loan" me some necessary furniture until I had leisure to purchase what was requisite.

My first idea had been to go to Pennsylvania alone; but my wife was anxious to see her new home, and Willy and the girls being no less eager to commence their novel existence there, I gave way, and it was settled that we should all travel together. We parted on the best possible terms with Mr. Pell, but the few colonial acquaintances we had in Toronto shook their heads ominously, and "hoped all might turn out well," in a manner that damped my spirits in spite of myself. But I remembered what Mr. Pell had said of the jealousy of the "Bluenoses," and their envious habit of depreciating the free republic on whose borders they dwelt, and I soon forgot the long faces of those I left behind. Our journey—the first part of which was accomplished by steam, and the latter by coach and waggon—was unadventurous and not unpleasing, and we reached Creek Blue without any suffering other than was produced by the jolting on the corduroy road. It was a pretty spot enough, embosomed in rocky hills, plentifully fringed with woods, then glowing with all the variegated tints of an autumn in America. My young people, in especial, seemed to think themselves in an earthly Eden, so great was their wonder and delight at the blaze of scarlet and crimson, golden russet and deep evergreen, that mantled the forests around us. The creek which gave its name to the estate, a broad stretch of shining water with deep banks overgrown by brushwood, came within rifle-shot of the house. The latter was a quaint, ungainly structure, with its lower story of coarse whinstone and fragments of granite; its upper walls of wooden slabs painted white, and a roof that was partly "shingled" and partly covered with blue slate. There were verandahs and a wooden gallery outside, and a monstrous shade-tree screened off much of the sun's rays. Willy and Florence were enchanted with everything, declaring that it was almost as romantic as Robinson Crusoe's self-built dwelling on the desolate island; while Lucy was disposed to forgive the grim ugliness of the house in consideration of the beautiful creepers that clung with their yellowed tendrils and blood-red leaves to the pillars of the verandah and the eaves of the roof.

Within there was an air of neglect, and it was plain that the late occupant must have been stingy of paint, and by no means prodigal of soap and water. But there was ample space, and the bare floors seemed sound and strong. The farm buildings were crazy and ill cared-for, and weeds grew thick in the great orchard; but a little cost and trouble would, doubtless, set all to rights. As for the land, I was no very good judge, but the fallows ought to have been fertile, to have produced such a rank luxuriance of hemlock and thistle, and the meadows were grazed by cattle

which, as I discovered, had made their way through gaps in the zigzag fences. The gardens were large, but showed the same signs of abandonment as the rest of the property.

"What a wretched place!" said my wife, with a sigh of bitter disappointment. It was my turn, however, to point out to her the bright side of the picture. We could not expect, I told her, to find the trim tidiness of a Cheshire dairy farm in a retired part of Pennsylvania, and a little trouble and expense would work wonders in a place with such natural capabilities. Emigrants must be prepared to rough it a little, and a new country could not possibly unite the merits of a long settled one to its own attractions. In fact, ere long I succeeded in clearing away the cloud from Louisa's face, and we joined in the hearty raptures of the children, who were constantly finding something fresh to admire.

We slept that night at the hotel, so called, of the village, which latter was some two miles from Creek Blue, and was kept by a brother of Elder Jonathan Kinder; and on the next morning the Elder came to conduct us over the estate. He was a tall, cadaverous man of sixty, with white hair cropped short, and pinkish eyes, like those of a bear, glittering under his heavily beetling brows. Altogether, the Elder's face was not one that Lavater would have been pleased with, but his suit of sober black was neatly brushed, and the white cravat he wore gave him in some measure a clerical appearance. He kept, as I understood, a general store at the other end of the village, and was held in high estimation, on account of his saintly character and worldly respectability. This information I had received from Mr. Pell, who spoke warmly in Mr. Kinder's praise.

"This is the main shaft," said this venerable person, after showing us the extent of the arable and pasture land—"this is the main shaft, and yonder is the small one; and there, mister, air the excavations where they quarry the black-lead. Those ruins yonder air the old smelting-houses, but they hev'n't been used sin' I was a boy. The deacon used to send the stuff to town in the raw, he did."

With some trouble I contrived to descend the creaking and defective series of ladders that gave access to the yawning pit, Willy preceding me with boyish activity and delight; and we found ourselves on a sort of rocky platform, with small galleries, too low-roofed to permit an explorer or worker to stand upright, branching off on every side. The rugged floor was strewn with earth, chips of stone, and lumps of iron ore. Willy made a stooping entry into two or three of the lateral passages, and with a broken iron shovel, which we found below, turned up a portion of the irregular floor. He came out with his hands as covered with red rust as those of a locksmith, and proudly displaying several weighty fragments of what even I could see was very rich ore.

A visit to the smaller shaft produced equally pleasing results; and when we entered the narrow adit of the plumbago mine, and extracted therefrom as much black-lead as sufficed to impart a sooty tinge to our

clothes and fingers, my satisfaction was complete, and I begged that the title-deeds might be transferred to my keeping, and the purchase-money to that of our venerable neighbour, without further delay.

"A fruitful and peaceful spot will you find it, Britisher," said the old man, in an unctuous tone, as he slowly counted and recounted the rustling bank notes; "and your family will be sartain to enjoy the location. Seven, eight, nine, ah! here's ten. You'll want fixings and notions, in course, and at my poor store you'll find most everythin', from a mousetrap to a ma-hogany chist of drawers."

So I had parted company from my thirteen thousand dollars, but had I not invested them well and wisely? So I thought, I am sure, and my wife and daughters more than agreed with me, for they were overjoyed to have emerged from Canadian hotels and boarding-houses, and once more to breathe the air of home. As for my son, he took to the place and the life as a fish takes to water, scoured the woods with dog and gun, worked ardently at repairing the garden fence, or the roof of the stable, and then would suddenly drop his tools, and scamper off on the back of a rough pony to Blossburg, to fetch something which his mother wanted for household purposes.

Buying such simple furniture as was needed to make the house habitable, repairing the more dilapidated of the farm buildings, stopping gaps, weeding the garden, and procuring some live stock, filled up our time fairly. Many of our purchases were made at Elder Kinder's store, and from persons recommended by him we bought a mule, and two horses for agricultural purposes, as well as some cows, sheep, poultry, and swine, and the shaggy pony aforesaid. The buying of these indispensable animals, with forage, tools, farm implements, a light waggon, and a stock of provisions such as it is usual to lay in in rural American districts, absorbed most of my superfluous cash. Some practical return for my outlay was therefore doubly to be desired, and when I hired a negro, an Irishman, and a stout-limbed, stolid-faced German, to aid in the cultivation, I stipulated that they should spend their spare time in giving assistance in the more profitable operation of extracting the mineral treasures of the earth. A bran-new gin, which was to be turned by the mule, had been erected to draw up the ore from the principal pit, and an old flat boat on the creek had been repaired for the purpose of conveying the iron to the Susquehannah.

My next duty was to look out for some competent person to supervise the actual mining, and here fortune stood my friend. A Welsh miner, an experienced man in his craft, on the look-out for employment in Pennsylvania, agreed, for a moderate salary and a per-centage on the ore raised, to be "captain" of the mine. I resolved to begin this work at once, and to defer breaking up the arable land till the shafts should be in full yield.

What were my feelings, then, when Willy, on the afternoon of the second day, came running excitedly into the house to fetch me, with,—

"Papa, Captain Morgan wants you directly. There is something wrong about the mine!"

I went, and found my captain and his men gathered about the top of the shaft, behaving very much in accordance with their national characters. The Welshman was hot and angry, Sullivan loud in ejaculation and expletive, the German phlegmatically puffing at his pipe, while the pick-axe lay at his feet, and the negro grinning and rolling his eyes about as if the whole affair were the best of jokes.

"Morgan, what is all this?"

"Dr. Bradley, sir, it's for me to ask your honour that! When you hired Thomas Morgan for your mining captain, was it to conduct a real mine, or was it to put a jest upon her, pray?" Then, seeing in my astonished face that I could not guess his meaning, the good-hearted Welshman cooled down a little, and begged my pardon if he had been rude. It was enough, he said, to put any man in a passion, to be put at the head of what he was led to believe a "clever" mine, and to find the whole affair a delusion.

"But—but—" gasped I, hardly able to speak, "do you mean that there is no ore?"

"By japers, it's a thrick, and a scandalous thrick too," cried Sullivan; "and it's my belief the ould sanctified sinner, Elder Kinder, is at the bottom of it. See there the good ore we got up yesterday, just one waggon-load, may be; and to-day we've shovelled and picked, picked and shovelled, and haven't brought up a morsel of iron big enough to shoe a horse, nor a donkey to that!"

Silently, with a deadly fear at my heart, and the hot blood coursing to my aching temples, I looked to the Welshman for confirmation of these appalling tidings; and Morgan, whose wrath had again reached the boiling point, told me, with furious imprecations on the rascals who had deceived him and me, that the whole thing was a palpable swindle. The mine, evidently an exhausted one, had been "dressed," by laying down a couple of cartloads of rich ore,—a mere bait to entrap the unwary; and no doubt the plumbago mine had been rejuvenated by the same simple process. It was mere throwing of the helve after the hatchet, the "captain" declared, to work the shrunkened lodes any more. Legal proceedings, perhaps, against the knaves who had robbed me——

But here the Welshman's voice, which had been gradually growing less audible, owing to the buzzing in my ears, reached me no longer, and I dropped like an ox under the stroke of the butcher's axe. When I recovered my senses I was in bed, surrounded by my family, with pale and frightened faces, and with a doctor, dressed in a coarse riding suit of homespun cloth, but with a shrewd and kindly face, holding my wrist between his strong fingers. "We shall do well enough. I assure you, Mrs. Bradley, there is no cause for alarm," said the doctor, with good-natured emphasis. Nor was there; for, thanks to his skill, the devotion with which I was nursed and cared for, and the strength of my constitution,

I was soon on my feet again, convalescent in body, but grievously sick in mind. We were ruined; of that there was no doubt. My three thousand pounds, all my children had to look to, were gone, and were represented by a worn-out mine, a lonely, ill-built house, and some indifferent land. Of the latter, Dr. Robinson, a good and honourable man, who showed much sympathy for our misfortunes, spoke as follows, when my recovery was complete:—

“You see, my dear sir, this property, on the death of old Deacon Joel White, was sold by auction, and bought as a spec., and dirt cheap, by Elder Jonathan Kinder, an unscrupulous person, for all his hypocritical semblance of religion, and one who always contrives to keep just outside the clutches of the law. No doubt, Pell and Facey—if there be a Facey, which from your story I very much doubt, the junior partner being probably a myth—merely served as cat’s paws to the true owner and prime mover in the plot, Kinder himself. As for Hiram Flake, I happen to know something of that worthy, and can assure you that he is a mere man of straw, no more a general than he is a prince of the blood, and formerly billiard marker at a saloon in Philadelphia. With regard to the land, Kinder is to blame, having exhausted the arable with crops of buckwheat until it is as barren as the Green Mountains.”

Legal proceedings, the doctor thought, would be very costly and uncertain, and a Pennsylvania jury would possibly consider such a fraud as merely a legitimate piece of “smartness,” especially when the victim was an Englishman, and the confederates free-born citizens of the State. Besides, the thing had been so cunningly done, that I could not sue Elder Kinder, but merely his shadow, Hiram Flake, from whom no pecuniary redress could be hoped.

The next days were melancholy ones for us all. The Indian summer was in its glory. Forest, meadow, and moorland were basking in the golden air and the delicious stillness of that calm, yet glowing season. But we could take no pleasure in the soothing warmth of the air, in the purple sky, the many-hued haze, or the beautiful tints of the mellowing woodlands. Care and grief were our portion, and self-reproach for my being so easily deceived embittered my thoughts. Not only was the mine a bubble, but the land was next door to valueless. We might, by pasturing cattle and tending hogs, pick up a scanty maintenance, but how different was this from the bright visions that had lured us across the Atlantic! Many a year of hardship and want lay before us, and our ruin was all but absolute.

So much was my wife’s spirit beaten down by adversity, that old prejudices were forgotten; and when Willy appeared one day, bringing with him a visitor, a former acquaintance whom he had met in the neighbourhood, no other than Henry Lee, and whom he had insisted should accompany him home, Mrs. Bradley received the young man with a cordiality that surprised me. Indeed, so welcome in our forlorn state was a friendly face,

that my wife burst into tears as the visitor extended his hand, and begged that all past unkindness might be forgotten. And forgotten it was, while Lucy's timid happiness at the renewal of our intimacy with our young countryman was a comfort to me, sad and sorry as I was.

Henry Lee was at Blossburg by mere accident, being wholly unaware of our migration to the States. He had fulfilled his task in Canada, and was on leave of absence from the service of the Pennsylvania Canal Company, into which he had lately entered at a high salary. He listened with sympathy to my story of wrong and villany, and then proceeded to a close inspection of the property. Morgan had gone long since, and only the Irish labourer remained on the land; and with him for an assistant, Lee explored the abandoned shafts, the woods, and the fallows, digging, boring, analyzing, with intelligent perseverance. Things might not, he briefly said, turn out so bad as they looked. For my own part, I hoped for nothing. If a bare subsistence could, by hard work, be scraped together, that was the extent of my present day-dreams. Thus matters stood when Willy and Lee, hot and flushed with triumph, made an irruption into the room where I sat listless.

"Papa—he has found it—Lee has—we shall be rich, after all!"

"What has he found? not iron?" said I, half incredulously.

"Not iron, my dear sir," said the young engineer, "but a fine flowing well of rock oil, that yields hundreds of gallons per hour, I should guess, and of the best petroleum too. I have no doubt there are more, if we do but bore in the right place. That scoundrel, old Kinder, will be fit to hang himself when he hears it. I would not raise false hopes, but really, Dr. Bradley, I believe your fortunes are repaired."

So they were. The well has now been at work some eighteen months, and I have nearly doubled the original capital which I sank in purchasing the estate. If iron ruined, petroleum has restored me, and the Elder's mortification has afforded a laugh to all the countryside. I have no more to add, but that it is nearly a year since my daughter Lucy, with her parents' hearty consent, became the wife of our friend and "preserver," as Louisa styles him, Henry Lee.

THE LAY OF TRAQUHAIR.

A MODERN BALLAD.

OH ! whose is this mansion so old and so grey,
 On whose stones are fast spreading the marks of decay—
 No dog in the kennel—no gun on the wall—
 No groom in the stable—no horse in the stall ?

The trees of the avenue, wither'd and spare,
 With each blast of the wind howl a dirge of despair ;
 The raven flaps by, on a lazy black wing,
 And croaks as it passes—an ill-omen'd thing.

Grass-grown is the pavement, the terrace, the court,
 And rank weeds peep in at the windows in sport ;
 Close barr'd the chief portal of iron and oak ;
 The ponderous knocker ne'er echoes a stroke.

Pass 'neath the low archway, and up the broad stair,
 The oak-panelled chambers are empty and bare ;
 The spider's gray tapestry festoons the door,
 And the rats and the mice riot over the floor.

But Death on that threshold his shadow hath cast ;
 'Tis the lord of the mansion whose spirit hath pass'd ;
 Yet no tear has been shed—not a mourner is there—
 For childless and lone died the lord of Traquhair.

O raise not the pall ! let the dull sable gloom
 Throw a veil o'er the dust that is claim'd by the tomb ;
 The Judge sits in heaven : do *thou* breathe a prayer
 For the sin-burden'd soul of the Lord of Traquhair.

The funeral over, the lawyers draw round
 To hear the last testament, eagerly found :
 Though brief the contents, they the secret reveal,
 That the aim of a life-time had sought to conceal.

" I hated my brother—I hated my kin—
 And this feeling through life was my shame and my sin ;
 We both loved one woman—he won her—and I
 Swore hatred to him and mankind. When I die,

" If his son shall be living, go seek him, and say,
 All my wealth became his when the breath left my clay ;
 My death will the wrong by compulsion repair,
 And I own Robert Stuart as Lord of Traquhair."

Astonish'd—bewilder'd—each one in surprise
 Lifts up to his neighbour his questioning eyes.
 "Now where is this Stuart—this long exiled heir
 To the title and acres of ancient Traquhair?"

The lawyers rode east, and the lawyers rode west,
 Of the fortunate heir to the earldom in quest;
 The lawyers rode north, and the lawyers rode south,
 To carry the tidings by sure word of mouth.

Now one of the number alone had a clue,—
 To the Stuart in heart he had ever been true;
 He remember'd the mother, a beautiful bride;
 He remember'd the son in his youth and his pride.

"And Stuart is now in the height of his prime!"
 He sighed; "what a mighty magician is Time!
 Perchance he has children himself, and an heir
 Of twenty fair summers to show to Traquhair."

Then he slack'd not his speed, till near London's great town,
 In a green, quiet suburb he 'lighted him down;
 And the heart of the old man beat thickly and fast,
 As he thought, "I shall look on the Stuart at last."

* * * *

A low-storied villa—upon the white walls
 The ivy, entwined with the jessamine, falls,
 And frames the wide windows, by which the perfume
 Floats in through the curtains that shadow the room.

A tea-table spread, but deserted—a swell
 As of two voices blending correctly and well;
 A woman's soft treble, a bass low and sweet,
 In an olden Scotch ballad harmoniously meet.

It ceases—and footsteps approaching are heard,
 The air to the sound of light laughter is stirr'd;
 And the old man's quick pulses again beating fast,
 Assure him he looks on the Stuart at last.

What sees he? A man over whose noble head
 The shadows of forty-five summers have sped—
 The eye of an eagle—the port of a king—
 The arm to which weakness for succour would cling—

The brow of a genius, serene, broad, and high,
Half conceal'd by the brown locks that over it lie;
Whilst the dark curling beard, sweeping down to the breast,
Leaves the charm of a magical smile to be guess'd.

And she! No proud Beauty's bold splendour is there,
And yet she is womanly, graceful, and fair;
And the earnest blue eye, with its clear glance of truth,
Gives the promise of mind and perpetual youth.

Not yet in her autumn, nor yet in her spring,
She is little in stature, a bonnie wee thing;
And silver threads gleam 'midst the soft hazel hair,
Flung back from that forehead, so candid and fair.

She gathers a bouquet—verbena and rose,
The scarlet geranium and jessamine's snows;
She holds it up to him—he stoops with a kiss,—
“The flowers are fragrant, but sweeter is this.”

She presses his hand to her lips with a smile,
With the other he smooths her soft tresses the while;
The lawyer's eyes glisten'd,—“Now God bless the pair,
They are fit to inherit the name of Traquhair.”

How little they thought what a change in their fate
Enter'd in with the old man who paused at the gate;
That a few fleeting seconds, and they should stand there
As the true Earl and Countess of ancient Traquhair!

The lawyer, in haste, told his errand in brief,
You may guess their surprise, and her wond'ring belief;
She learns for the first time his rank and his birth,
Her own Robert Stuart, her idol on earth.

There's a smile on her lip, there's a tear in her eye,
She forgets for a moment a stranger is by;
She drops a low curtsey all playfully there,—
“I am first to salute thee, O Earl of Traquhair!”

Then with a quick impulse she springs to his breast,
And while in his clasp she is lovingly prest,—
“God grant that no change in our love may be wrought
By the rank and the riches these tidings have brought.

"No care for the morrow—no fear for thy health;
For this, oh, how gladly I welcome our wealth!
No more the pale cheek and the hot aching brow—
No tears for my Robin in secret shed now!"

* * * *

What means all this movement in Castle Traquhair?
What groups of all ages are gathering there?
The lights in the windows, now blazing so bright?
The torches, that glare in the gloom of the night?

There are tramlings of footsteps, and distant hurrahs,
There are bonfires and rockets, wild shouts, glad huzzas;
The wheels! they are coming! loud shouts read the air,
"Now ten thousand welcomes, thou Earl of Traquhair!"

They alight;—as his tall, noble figure appears,
The wide welkin echoes the tempest of cheers;
Then he lifts out his Countess and clasps her white hand,—
On his ancestral threshold united they stand.

He bares his proud head, and he utters a prayer
Of thanks to the goodness that guided him there.
" 'Judge nought,' says my motto; a Judge sits in heaven.
Peace be to the dead; be his errors forgiven.

"Oh, clansmen! among you we'll live and we'll die."
Blue flash'd the bright broadswords, and loud rose the cry,—
"Our Countess we'll love and obey to a man!
All hail! Robert Stuart, the Chief of our Clan!"

Robert Stuart, like one all bewilder'd, had stood,
So fix'd his dark eye, and so absent his mood;
But when she ceased speaking, he bent on one knee,
And his words and his kisses burst warmly and free:—

"My own faithful darling! my dear one! my wife!
Whose love came like sunshine to gladden my life,
After forty years' loneliness, struggles, and care,
And the deep disappointments that presage despair;—

"I ardently long'd to be loved for myself,
For no possible station, no possible pelf.
Forgive, if one secret at heart I conceal'd
From her to whom all else was fully reveal'd.

"Yes, we have been most happy!—so happy, that I
Could at this very moment contentedly die;
But that still I must cherish the wish, fond and wild,
To bless thee again in the face of a child.

"What ease and what honour shall compass thee now!
Rich silk for thy garments, bright gems for thy brow!
My people shall worship the sweet English rose
That beside the Scotch thistle so modestly grows.

"Oh! fitted alike for man's weal or man's woe,
What a debt to thy patient long-suffering I owe!
I would choose thee again, were I free as the air,—
Cling close while I bless thee, my Countess Traquhair!"

* * * *

Once more there is feasting in hut and in hall,
Brown ale and good liquors are flowing for all.
The banner floats gaily 'mid bonfire and shout;
There is hurry and gladness within and without:

For when autumn the earth in her gay tints had drest,
And robed in rich purple her heathery breast,
The Stuart could smile at the birth of an heir
To the Earldom and acres of ancient Traquhair.

KINGSWOOD CLARE.

♦

ART IN AMERICA

BY MAJOR H. BYNG HALL.

since I wrote a line in my note-book, and judging from my seems like a year. Events rapidly succeeding always make anger in retrospect. It is only monotony that is brief to look

ed ere this to have recrossed the Atlantic, once more on my "ould country." England—home—precious words to those travelled far and wide as I have, and who acknowledge a en as their sovereign, and our sea-girt island as their father-most blest of all resting-places. And yet, why should not the on be as beautiful? And it is as beautiful, doubtless, to those t as their home and country; indeed it would be all but if the knowledge that civil strife is raging throughout the land, in the mind of the wanderer, as well as in that of the native everish thirst for news from beyond the Potomac, could be

re with some kind and generous friends for a brief period of ppose it can be called, when the daily post brings with it papers, filled with untold exaggerations of what is, or ought y be, or has never been, as regards the contending armies in nd yet the place of my abode is a lovely one, well selected for g-place, if the world's ways would let him ever be at rest; ll of comfort, and replete with hospitality and kindness.

from my window, beneath which, or I should rather say hot of which, the majestic Hudson rolls calmly towards the y, wood-clad hills rise grandly from the water sidé; moun-es wrapped in a tangled mass of noble evergreens; while the laurel, the oleander, the lofty pine, and clustering shrubs, eful drapery over the deep blue river's banks.

idless sky, the unruffled water, on which numerous ships or ding, the unusual stillness of the scene, all would seem to tell, nscious of the wild passions which crowd on the hearts of the ho inhabit the great city so near at hand, that man, like nature,

Alas! it is not so; far from it.

, looking as I now look, while writing, on such a scene, and myself the lethargic life of ease, which not even thought dis-which might be passed on such a spot, I half wonder within d it fared with us in England, had not God granted to us that irit of enterprise, that active zeal, and thirst for wealth, over every obstacle, and causing man justly to judge the labour, making all Englishmen look on home, and peace, and ghtly understood," his purest blessings?

This beautiful little room in which I write, with its windows looking on the grand river; the well-kept terrace, on which, breakfast over, we enjoy the matutinal havannah; the clustering roses and hollyhocks,—it is late autumn time, and yet all is calm and sunshine;—there is a dreamy, visionary feeling that seems to be the spirit of the place, encouraging thought, and yet leading the mind to moody reverie, and I seem to ask myself, again and again, how I came here, so far away from home and friends in England, across the troubled waters of the Atlantic, and while my eye rests on the fair scenery of America, my thoughts fly back to the rural scenes of “merrie England.”

But my dream is ended. The arrival of the post from New York brings one forcibly back, practically and painfully, to the cares and duties of busy life—papers and letters, letters and papers. Alas that we should, alas that we do, seize them with eager hands and eyes, and revel in the contents, true or false, good or evil, as a hungry labourer sits down to his scanty meal! My morning’s quiet is broken in upon, as I said, by the arrival of the mail,—the most important event of the day,—at least it must be so to those whose hearts and hopes are with the contending armies; and my kind host, his most amiable wife, and fair young daughters, I must confess, had their opinions, and somewhat strong ones, as to the passing events, in which probably I might in a measure have coincided, regardless of the causes which might be theirs, but which have no place in a sketch like this of mere passing events far away from home.

However, the first paragraph, or advertisement, which calls my attention on opening a newspaper will in a measure give some insight into the nature of the individuals who claim, by the law of appointment at least, the right to command the troops of the United States in the field of strife. Of course there are many officers who are exceptions, and most noble ones, to the general rule; but I fear me the majority are more or less like our friend, whose failing health causes him to seek a substitute. A fair judgment may therefore be formed of the military talent and effectiveness of the tall President’s army—notwithstanding its prowess in the hour of battle.

“THE REBELLION.

“An Officer of the Army, who is about to retire from the service on account of ill health, can influence the appointment of another person in the position vacated by him—the conditions being these, that the party appointed to such position shall place the advertiser in a business situation, where the salary shall be equal to the advertiser’s present pay.

“The party advertising is a practical book-keeper, a good correspondent, and can give good City references to character and business capacity.—Address, Capt. —, Box 140, — Office.”

What say you to that, ye gentlemen of our army? Supposing our officers were to send such advertisements for insertion, how would the people of England fare with another Inkermann or Balaclava?

And now let me dwell on pleasanter subjects—those of art and artists.

I write on this subject in simple words, but it is with pride that I own to being an enthusiastic lover of art. Whether that art be the work of the painter's or the sculptor's hand, or whether it arise from the noble institutions of Sèvres, Dresden, or Capo de Monte, or the more modern times of Linton—indeed, all appertaining to art, from whatever country, or from whatever race. If it bear the stamp of genius combined with beauty, it is a taste conveying to the mind untold pleasure and refined pursuits—indeed, far higher virtues. I believe it was that gifted Christian gentleman, the present Archbishop of Canterbury, who gracefully and truthfully remarked, “that the higher order of art was the constant handmaid of religion; and that those great masterpieces which still adorn the collections of Europe seem to have been the offspring of piety, and were powerful—indeed, are still—aids to reverence and devotion.” Altered circumstances have, perhaps, in later days somewhat changed the direction in which the current of genius used to flow; but still art has, and ever will have, a high and noble mission to fulfil. That man, I think, is little to be envied who can look on works of art, and go forth without being in some sense a better and a happier man—if, at least, it be so, that we feel ourselves the better and the happier when our hearts are enlarged as we sympathize with the joys and sorrows of our fellow-men.

It has been my good fortune to know, indeed, I hope to form friendships—friendships which I fully estimate—with some of the leading artists of the United States, and to visit, with untold gratification, their studios, watching for hours together the hand of art following the counsels of the brain. Among the few most eminent—though I should grieve to think by mentioning them I might hurt the feelings of one unknown to me—I may name Church, Bierstadts, Darley, Hayes, &c., all of New York; while I have also been permitted to visit several private galleries of eminent men, all lovers of art, who, but for the sad war now devastating their country, were great supporters, and I trust may long continue to support the rising talent of American painters, who bid fair to rival, if not surpass, the most celebrated artists of days past and present in Europe. Among the possessors of the best pictures, both ancient and modern, in New York, I may name Mr. James Lenox, who is always prepared to give a good price for a good picture; Mr. Wright, my countryman, who, in his charming villa on the south of the Hudson, possesses Rosa Bonheur's famous picture of “The Horse Fair,” and other choice pictures. Mr. James Lenox, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Wright, &c., are one and all generous supporters of art. Indeed, the prices given for pictures and works of art in the United States surpass all I have heard of in Europe, and the taste for art among the educated and higher class of America is greatly increasing.

Mr. Church—and I place him at the head of American landscape painters, without in the slightest degree desiring uncourtously to detract from the great talents or merits of many of his colleagues—is well and

deservedly known in England, as throughout Europe, by his celebrated picture of the "Heart of the Andes," now in the possession of Mr. Blodgett, of New York, and for which a large sum—I believe two thousand pounds—was deservedly paid. This picture was seen some few years since in England, and it is now followed by that of "The Icebergs," exhibiting in Bond Street. For hours have I watched his pencil working on the canvas, and all who look on his picture must alike admit the interest of the subject and the talent of the artist. This, doubtless, ere long will be followed by his last splendid picture of "Cotopaxi," which must be seen to realize its great and many beauties. I may briefly state in illustration that Cotopaxi, one of the loftiest mountains in that part of the world, rises from the Andean chain in Ecuador, not far from Guito; and its custom of ejecting boulders, as large as the Tarpeian rock, imparts to the lives of the surrounding inhabitants that dreamy ease and tranquil sense of obscurity which is elsewhere sought in vain. It is, indeed, a very celebrated mountain; Humboldt has spoken respectfully of it, and endless adventurers have watched its flying lava. To Mr. Church has fallen the lot of giving to the world its vast and most resplendent celebration.

This, with the exception of some smaller but charming coast pieces, is his latest picture and his masterpiece. The subject is as formidable, and opposes as many obstacles to the painter, as his "Icebergs" or "Niagara," but it gives a better opportunity than either of these for various and picturesque effect. The "Icebergs" seen in London radiate upon the spectator an atmosphere of cold. There is not a pulse of life upon the canvas;—nothing but glittering precipices of ice, and rugged summits hoary with snow, and desolate reaches of water.

"Niagara" is a weltering chaos of angry water. It startles the spectator into surprise, and extorts admiration, but does not touch the sympathies. It is impossible to sympathize with big cataracts, but in presence of Niagara the soul is awed, and its softer senses laid asleep.

"Cotopaxi," with its resounding explosions and its torrents of sulphuretted smoke, might be equally appalling, but that the artist has interposed an interval of forty miles between the mountain and the spectator.

It is outlined against the horizon, one slope standing out sharply relieved against the sky. The other is obscured by masses of smoke, which roll down the side of the mountain, and drift away, forming a murky canopy, beneath which the sun has just risen.

The red tropical light streams out along the landscape with a lurid fire, through its thick volumes of smoke.

"Cotopaxi" is not a large picture in the material meaning of the term, but in the scope of the landscape, and in the sense of space with which the artist has filled it, it is one of the largest pictures ever painted. Yet this is perhaps its least merit: its practical truth, not to the scene alone, but to the world—the meaning and expression of nature—entitles it to

stand in the first ranks of modern painting. Of Mr. Church's merits as an artist I have said enough, and more than enough, to convince my readers of the rising art of America. Mr. Church is quite a young man; and rarely have I met with one possessing such eminent talent and such a fund of humour, of such modest—nay, almost feminine—gentleness of demeanour, or so warm and truthful in his friendship. In the space allowed in a magazine it is impossible to dwell, save cursorily, on the merits even of the few artists I am about to name; their works, present and to come, will, however, speak for themselves. Mr. Darly, the talented illustrator of "Marguerite" and the "Sleepy Hollow," and various other works of Washington Irving and Dickens, &c., and who has recently produced some admirable works illustrative of scenes in the present war, in his peculiar line of art, stands almost unrivalled. Possessing, on the one hand, the humour of Cruikshank in his best day, combined with the power of grouping so as to cast over the inanimate characters traced by his unerring and rapid pencil a sense of feeling and lifelike expression, telling their own tale, which is perfectly marvellous. And when I add that as yet Mr. Church and Mr. Darly have never quitted their own country; that they have never visited the rich galleries of Europe, nor dwelt on the realities of life, save as depicted in the States, it is marvellous the high degree of art they have attained, and the spirit which appears to have grafted itself, I may say, on their imaginations, enabling them to bring before the world lifelike portraits of scenes never practically beheld. And I must own that among the number of artists who permitted me to look on their noble works and watch their daily labours, there appeared to me to reign an unconsciousness and modesty in reference to their great merits, which the world does not generally ascribe to Americans—and with reason.

Another artist of most distinguished talent and merit is Mr. Bierstadts, of New York. I am not aware as to whether any of his pictures have been sent to England; if not, I truly hope they may be sent. He has, I believe, travelled in Europe; but, generally speaking, he confines himself to works of American scenery. I had recently the pleasure of seeing on his easel, all but finished, his last large and splendid picture of the "Rocky Mountains," a picture of the very highest order of art, replete with beauty and interest. I trust ere long we may look on this picture in our fatherland, and dwell on its excellences, as have many of us on the works of Mr. Church. I believe Her Gracious Majesty was pleased to express her admiration of the "Hearts of the Andes;" while the late amiable Marquis of Lansdowne, on beholding it, observed that he cared little who was the artist; it was one of the finest pictures the eye of man ever looked on. And as regards myself, humble as is my opinion, when dining with its present owner—whose gastronomic indulgences were generously given, and of no mean order—I always requested, as the picture covered the greater portion of one side of his dining-room, that I might be permitted to sit

with my back to it, at least till I had appeased my appetite; inasmuch as the longer I looked at it the more I was pleased, and thus forgot the meritorious *plats* which covered the table. Mr. Bierstadts, though possibly possessing less poetic taste and imagination, has a bolder hand even than Church; and his "Rocky Mountains," if sent to the old country, will, or I greatly err, find abundant favours from those who love to look on modern excellence in art. A quotation of a few lines written on the subject of this fine picture will in some measure illustrate its merits, —or at least describe the nature of the scene it presents.

"The vales are green and narrow, and the rivers swift and deep,
Which lie between these stately hills, where nature's glories sleep,
Unbroken by the white man's tread, the white man's rifle sound,
And echoing but the Indian's whoop, the panther's deadly bound.
The red man's slender birch canoe upon each stream is seen,
The red man's wandering tent of skins is spread on every green;
But his nation's strength and glory like morning's mist must fade
Before the march of enterprise, led by the sword and spade."

Mr. Hayes is the Landseer,—Ansdell and Herring combined, without the artistical talent of either; yet possessing great practical genius, with a most successful power of delineation. Like many of his talented colleagues, Mr. Hayes has never visited Europe; his pictures are therefore principally confined to placing on the canvas a lifelike representation of the wild animals of his native country. Mr. Hayes recently sent to England a noble picture of a herd of buffaloes crossing the prairies, a subject which he treated with great skill and effect. A sight of this picture, which I believe was in the Exhibition of '62, can alone enable those who have never visited the prairies of North America to form the slightest idea of the reality and grandeur of such a living scene. Mr. Hayes has recently finished another even more talented picture of a herd of buffaloes crossing the prairie in a fog, which is most spirited in execution, and wonderful as regards effect. His dogs and other animals are equally lifelike. And should this artist visit Europe, which is believed to be his intention, the wider field for his talent and imagination will doubtless enable him to run a close race with the artists I have named, as with Rosa Bonheur, whose style of execution in a great degree he resembles.

The few names I have mentioned, as successful American artists of the modern school, are quite sufficient to show the love and rise of art in the United States. In a paper like this it would be in vain to give any readable description of the numerous other artists unknown in England, though of equal merit. I have selected these, inasmuch as I had the pleasure of knowing them well, and constantly watching their labours. But I disclaim most emphatically the idea that in so far offering my humble tribute of praise and amateur opinions of art, the slightest desire of detracting in the most remote degree from the great talents of numerous others. Meanwhile, it is my firm belief that the school of American

painters, the taste and love for art and of art, in all its phases, already so forcibly evinced, bids fair to place itself on as high a pedestal as any modern school of art in Europe, if so be it has not already attained to it.

The principal picture galleries in New York are those of—

W. H. ASPINWALL .	Old masters.
AUGUSTE BELMONT .	French and Belgian art.
JOHN JOHNSTON .	American. Mr. Johnston owns Church's "Niagara."
ROBERT STUART .	Principally American pictures.
MARSHALL ROBERTS	Ditto.
W. OLIPHANT .	Mostly American.
JOHN WOLFE .	French and Belgian.
W. P. WRIGHT .	Various pictures, including Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair."

Among celebrated painters I may name Church, Heusett, Megriot, Gifford, Daniel Huntington, Eastman, Johnston, S. H. Broughton.

Palmer may be justly named as the leading sculptor. Next I place his pupil, L. Thompson. While in Europe there are many eminent American sculptors—such as H. Powers, Miss Heusmer, Rogers, &c.; but as a genuine American sculptor, I must give the highest rank to Palmer.

And now my duties call me homewards, once more I cross the wild waters of the Atlantic. And yet how much more have I to say at some future time of a land which God has made so beautiful, and a people—those among whom I lived, at least—from whom I received unbounded hospitality and kindness! And if so be the so-termed people who rule that land by the miscalled voice of liberty—converted practically into despotism by the curse of universal suffrage, which gives the power of action to a rabble, not of American people, but a mongrel breed of Irish of the worst class, and Germans, their colleagues—are not of a pleasant stamp, I would forget the errors of the many in the virtues of the minority. And it may be hoped that when the wretched war, now depopulating the country, is at an end, and peace once more reigns over the fair land, America may take a noble position among the great nations of the world, offering the hand of friendship and commerce across every sea, blessed with internal order and peace at home; giving, in fact, to all Europe and India the riches of its bosom; and, with the generous feelings which its people possess, living in friendly relation and exchange of wealth with the world.

MADELEINE GRAHAM

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WHITEFRIARS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HASCHEESCH.

LANDING early the next morning at Killarney, Mr. Behringbright took up his quarters at an obscure inn a little out of the town, as befitted a traveller of exceedingly moderate pretensions, when on his own hook; and from this point he began (he almost persuaded himself) to study his health, and a taste for fine scenery he could conscientiously believe he possessed, though perhaps it occasionally bored him a little, by excursions on and around the lakes.

Of course, he soon fell in with the Bucktrout party. They were more abroad even than other tourists, in consequence of the doctor's passion for boating and fishing. The ladies did not care for fishing, but they very much enjoyed the air and water, and could take their books and crochet-work with them quite delightfully, without attending to the doctor. Fish do not scream, nor worms, nor flies; and consequently there is nothing to annoy the tenderest heart in the recreation, carried on by others. Madeleine's bright green parasol once seen always marked out her locality on the lake, and nothing was easier than for anybody else's boat to row accidentally that way. Young Sparrowgrass's often did, though his mother and sisters would have preferred another direction, mostly. But the heir-general had taken a strange fit of obstinacy on water, and would follow his own fancies in this respect. Mr. Behringbright's seemed to set off of its own accord towards the bright green pavilionette on the shining waves. At least, Darby O'Finn, whom he hired as his boatman *en permanence*, ceased in a few days, with national tact, to ask the question, and his daughter steered quite naturally towards it. Miss Graham was there usually to be discerned, reclining gracefully with an apologetical book in her hand, in the stern, on a heap of cloaks and cushions, in the most charmingly simple morning costumes that art could devise. Chiefly white, I think, or delicately flowered; mostly with a little nosegay, carelessly gathered, and still more carelessly set in her bosom; a plaid burnous cast in harmonious folds of softly variegated emerald tints around her; and her beautiful complexion and sparkling eyes showing to the greatest advantage, from the shade of her brown sailor's hat, with its flutter of scarlet ribands in the breeze.

Mr. Behringbright would not have grudged, if he had had all the trouble of the rowing to do himself, any amount of hard work that way to secure the reward of the brilliant glance of pleasure—the captivating welcome which shone up in the heightened roses of the syren's cheek, on the first occasion they thus renewed their acquaintance. Everybody, in fact, was delighted to see him. Mrs. Bucktrout—vaguely understanding he was wanted for some purpose of her niece, though she did not well see what—relaxed from her usual mummy-like rigidity—over a bitter tract—to greet him. The doctor, indeed, fought rather shy of him at first, thinking him poor, and therefore not at all understanding what on earth his niece could mean by looking so pleased to recognize such a shabbily-dressed person. But he soon took his cue also,—fancied, perhaps, that even this unlikely individual, if no one else was to be had, was to be played off against young Sparrowgrass. He did not puzzle his brain, however, much about the matter, but did as usual—as his niece seemed to wish him to do: concealed his vexation at having his lines disturbed; readily gave permission to his wife and Madeleine to change from his boat into Mr. Behringbright's, and he rowed elsewhere; kindly seconded Mrs. Bucktrout's invitation to the civil stranger, on their return, to come and see them at their hotel; and when Mr. Behringbright joined them that same evening there, expanded himself into hospitality and sociability. Nay, Mrs. Bucktrout overcame an intense horror she had of cards, which she wotendly styled "leaves of the devil's book," and took a hand at whist, on the visitor declaring himself partial to the game. And indeed it seemed a most excellent pretext for a frequent renewal of the visit, and nothing could be pleasanter than to play at any kind of game with such a bright and vivacious partner as Madeleine Graham proved, and who seasoned almost every commonplace of the affair with a splendid glance, or an intoxicating smile, or a brilliant word, or a still more overpowering little, half-checked sigh.

After their niece's accident, the Bucktrouts had thought it best to secure her quiet by taking a private apartment in Prospect Palace. But still it was fortunate for the preservation of Mr. Behringbright's incognito that Vivian Fauntleroy, excessively out of humour at Miss Graham's unpolite demeanour towards him, when drowning, had determined to cut her. More especially as his great patron, the Marquis, likewise disgusted at his exclusion from the picnic, declared the Bucktrouts were a *low set*, and that he would have nothing more to do with them. This pair of worthies therefore retired from general circulation in the hotel; but speedily growing weary of billiards, brandy and water, cigars, and one another's lies about women and horses, voted Killarney a bore and a humbug, and set off together for Baden-Baden.

Vivian borrowed the necessary cash for his expenses (the Marquis *never lent to anybody*, else he would, he said, have relaxed the rule in Mr.

Fauntleroy's favour) from young Mr. Sparrowgrass, having forgotten to bring his own cheque-book with him,—on the understanding, however, that he was a person who possessed the most influential introductions in London, and would be happy to be of service to any young gentleman who desired to make the acquaintance of the great world there. And young Mr. Sparrowgrass was the more readily induced to believe this, as his sister Helena was thoroughly persuaded she had made a conquest of Mr. Fauntleroy at the picnic, and should hear a good deal more about it in town, in case she did not effect any other more to her mind before returning there. And all the Sparrowgrasses thought it would be a first-rate thing if they could get Helena married. She was growing very cross in temper, and *was* so tall and awkward!—her second sister, Matilda, who was a little less long, and a good deal more graceful, in her own opinion,—often declared.

Everything conspired for Mr. Behringbright's destruction. Not only the artifice and fascination of the sorceress who had undertaken his entanglement. There was also the balmily enervating influence of the summer climate of the Killarney lakes; the witchery of the enchanting scenery; the excitement and gaiety of a holiday population; music and pleasure on all sides. And to complete the poor millionaire's dangers, Lord Glengariff persisted in introducing the potent element, in love affairs, of jealousy.

However the men decry the use of this agency, the women have in all ages understood its powerful efficacy; and wherever they could, have mingled the ingredient, anything short of explosion, which they seldom like or desire, in their love-powder. And this young nobleman appeared on the new scene almost as soon as Mr. Behringbright—with a splendid bouquet of flowers from the Glengariff conservatories in his hand, the principal snowy camelia being matched in the button-hole over his heart, and a gallant request in his mouth, that he might be allowed to do the honours of his native lakes to the fair visitor whom he had rescued from their depths. How was it possible to refuse? as Madeleine herself had pathetically asked Mr. Behringbright, on casually mentioning the circumstance to him. Although it *was* such nonsense for a grand young nobleman like that to take such notice of plain, quiet people like them! People would be sure to wonder at it;—only it would have looked so ungrateful and uncivil to refuse!

Mr. Behringbright thus found himself fairly pitted against a splendid competitor, who, reversing the young lord's suspicions of himself, he imagined might really have transferred his volatile affections to so superior a charmer, and to be as capable of honourable intentions towards the new object as he had been to his former idolatry.

Of course this notion stimulated Mr. Behringbright's own natural slowness of purpose, and in other ways greatly contributed to hasten on

the catastrophe. On the one hand, Madeleine could alarm him with the apprehension of a rival so formidable in every outward aspect. On the other, she could flatter his innermost feelings and aspirations with the conviction that he was himself preferred in the manner he had always most desired. Preferred for *himself alone*, since he still sustained the inferior social character he had originally assumed; thoroughly humoured in the caprice by Lord Glengariff, who, on the contrary, displayed all the advantages of his own position in even glaring and exaggerated lights. Preferred to a young, handsome, wealthy nobleman! What more was necessary to remove the once-impassable Balkan of Mr. Behringbright's incredulity in the sex from Madeleine's path?

This eminent professoress of the art of *marrying well* (our age has made it one, in a very different sense from the fancies of romancers) set about her work in quite a business-like, adept style. She had learnt a good deal, even in her ridiculous love affair with the Frenchman, as she now considered it. It certainly saves a great deal of hesitation and bungling when people know what they are about from experience. The human heart is as complex an instrument to play on as any cornet-à-pistons in the world, and only practised hands can avoid making disagreeable, ear-rending false notes upon it. As to joining in the harmony of the orchestral movements to which the cheats and phantom shows of William Shakespere's great stage of the world are set, it is entirely out of the question for the unpractised. And this is the only way I have ever been able to account to myself for the superior success often witnessed in husband-catching on the part of widows over unmarried females.

It was a kind of problem Madeleine had placed before her, and she proceeded with almost the calmness and precision of a mathematician to obtain her results. Love and jealousy were her sines and cosines for the operation; her "let A. B. and C. represent so-and-so, and the quotient is so-and-so." She had to persuade Mr. Behringbright that she loved him, in the first place. A difficult process with a man who had learned caution in a school where the lash welts so deeply into the flesh, and leaves such life-long scores,—who had little or no personal vanity of any sort,—who was not even proud of his riches, but knew their vanity and nothingness for happiness. Given a good, strong leverage-point of vanity, and you may lift the heaviest idiosyncrasies! But Mr. Behringbright was extremely far from believing in himself at all; no art could have persuaded him that he was handsome, or young, or sprightly, or witty. He was thoroughly aware that he could neither sing, nor dance, nor make poetry; he had no moustaches, no matchlessly-flowing beard to put faith in. How was such a man to be cajoled?

The enchantress knew but too well that the most efficacious of love-philtres is—love! So divine a nectar *love* is, that even the least artfully-compounded and deleterious imitations, so often commended to the human

lip, find a ready acceptance, ever so slightly flavoured with the true honey of Hymettus.

But hers was a most subtly-compounded potion, it cannot be denied. None but the gods themselves could have distinguished it from their proper amber drink! How, then, should Mr. Behringbright? A person who I have never pretended to be distinguished by any intensity of penetration into the mysteries of women's natures; who remembered that his wife had been dull in intellect, coarsely fashioned in person, impatient, irascible, insolent, and yet had been one of the worst of women. Was it not reasonable, then, to think that a girl of bright wit, endowed with a beautiful person, smiling, tender, submissive as a cooing dove, who *seemed* to love him so well, might really do so, and thus, in that respect also, reverse that worthless *divorcée's* characteristics?

Nay, I am not sure that Madeleine really did not take some kind of liking and affection for Mr. Behringbright while she was thus engaged in his enthrallment. I almost think she did, and was sorry at times that she had so fatally compromised herself with another man as to be obliged to do so many wicked things—to act such a vile, false, unwomanly part—to secure this rich husband. I know she had her qualms of hesitation and relenting—of remorse, perchance—as she grew to comprehend what an honest, manly-hearted, credulous, good sort of a human victim she was dragging to the sacrifice! But these glimpses of better feeling had no more practical result upon her actions than the faint sentiments of compassion that may assail the butcher as he sharpens his knife, and hears the bleating of the sheep in the slaughterhouse. Nay, I do not assert it, but I fancy she had some notion of a degree of generosity and self-immolation on her own part in plotting to bring about the result she aimed at. Was she now doing her duty to her family and to society—following the imperious mandates of the latter—at a great sacrifice of volition and preference? It is true she was her own remorseless controller and persecutrix—the Lady Ashton of her own Lucy. But was even this last poor victim driven into more heart-rending consequences by the stern mother and hateful brother, than to desert the man she loved, to marry another she didn't? Yet this was the course Madeleine Graham set and remorselessly urged herself on! Triumphantly martyred, she rose above the sway of her own inmost natural feelings and inclinations, to follow the tide of opinion into that legitimate issue of a marriage with a million of money!

Such was the object. All this trouble, difficulty, danger, guilt, betrayal, incurred,—for what? To be a rich man's wife. To have gilded furniture and large mirrors. To have carriages, horses, a town and country house; to wear silks and satins; to have a box at the opera, and consequent right of despising every rational theatrical entertainment. Perhaps,—unspeakable consummation of all those earthly blessings!—

to be all but crushed into a pulp with one's feathers and jewels in the narrow lobbies of a dirty old palace, "going to Court!"

These must have been the objects, I suppose; for these are the best things the greatest fortunes can purchase. Most decidedly Madeleine had conceived no passion, however well she might counterfeit one, for Mr. Behringbright. She saw plainly that he was elderly; rather bald; that his eyes had no particular lustre, and that he was *not* dressed in the height of fashion. People who are in love don't see these facts. But though she was not in love, she *acted* the passion, as she had known it in those young, senseless days when she really felt it, before the enchanted eyes of her new lover, to a matchless perfection. Her eyes brightened, her complexion carnationed, when she espied him; she listened to his simplest words (and he was not eloquent) with rapt interest and attention; her own voice mellowed to a gentler music, her expressions seemed to steep themselves in an unconscious tenderness, when she addressed him. She seemed wretched out of his sight, happy only when he was present; and yet it was all false, simulated, counterfeit.

Such is the spell of the demon Money over our age, that this unhappy girl imagined she was yet doing quite right in endeavouring to secure it at any price. She was not even wronging her really preferred lover, she thought: she intended a share of the plunder for him. In fact, Madeleine was so corrupt she did not know she was corrupt at all. Her business was to secure this wealthy husband; all the rest only told for counters in a game of skill. And secure him she did, as far as lay in feminine fascination and skill. Fate is at times stronger, of course, than our best endeavours—a goddess not to be appeased, even when we heap her altars with all that is really valuable in existence—throw our hearts themselves to blaze and crackle into dust upon the costly pile!

After all, this must have been a most exceptional case. I take it as the text of a general homily; but Madeleine Graham's cannot have been anything else, or the end of the world must be indeed well nigh come, and anything but a millennium of paradise to follow! There must have been something extremely out of the way in so young a woman being capable of such perfidy; something diabolical in so perfect an insensibility and death, at the core of so fervid and life-like an outward simulation. Nature was outraged by it—by that mass of ice frozen in a centre of radiating fire! It annoyed Madeleine herself to know that it was so. She would have given anything to feel the emotion she counterfeited. And if for no other reason, perchance from the trouble and anxiety attendant on a *representation*—the constant risk of flaw and failure. It is hard to play a part consistently from beginning to end, even when one has studied it in its minutest details, for the public enjoyment, on the stage. One can't help having one's intervals, however brief, of lapse into the natural. I have heard Hamlet sneeze so naturally as to convulse a whole house with

laughter, when all the rest of his enactment was as stagey and *undertaker-like* as could have been desired. And what is the trouble of playing even that most fagging of all high tragedy parts, compared to feigning a love one does not feel?

Madeleine's performance, however, was a great success with her principal critic and spectator.

In the first place, the poor man had been all his life longing—thirsting like the camel in the desert for the living springs—for this draught of heavenly happiness, which he now imagined to be raised to his parched lips. Lips parched to baking and bleeding in that drear passage of matrimony he had undergone; and which he had despaired ever to see open on those rose-gardens of Damascus, shadowed by the date and fig, he now fancied he realized in the shining mirage rising at his feet! It was pleasant to fall into such a snare—to feel the virgin stirrings of that most splendid sentiment of existence, which Mr. Behringbright had so long resigned himself to believe would for ever elude his experience. He came to it rather past the season, 'tis true, in the reckonings of the almanac; but not in the unploughed freshness and luxuriance of the affections. Love is always young, we know—endowed with an immortal boyhood. And so, to speak the whole truth without any further apologetic ambages, Mr. Behringbright fell in love, head over ears, as passionately and absorbingly as if he had been a Romeo of two or three and twenty.

How people go on when once they are fairly entangled in this sort of maze admits of very little variation, either in actuality or description. Mr. Behringbright grew, in the first place, to consider that a bright green parasol was the loveliest of all imaginable sights on a Killarney lake, with the exception of the object it shaded from the sun. He thought there never were before so matchless a hand and glove as were occasionally to be seen resting on the gunwale of Dr. Bucktrout's fishing-boat; no music of flute or soft recorder could equal the melody of *that* voice; it uttered no word that was not replete with sense, modesty, sweetness, goodness, kindness, generosity, and feeling. No eyes in the world—the stars of heaven themselves—equalled *those* in tender and penetrating lustre. No one was half so accomplished—sung, played the piano, sketched, distributed cards—like the lovely Madeleine. Likewise, she was the most generous and disinterested of human beings: she loved him, *George Brownjohn*, for himself alone: she could not rationally reckon him at more than three hundred per annum salary, if even that! With all the sparkling and enchanting coquetry of her manner—of her delicious, enthralling smiles—of her whole speaking, animated, ecstatic form—she did not care the least for the splendid rival who ostentatiously presented himself in the character—*τὸ καλόν*—the matchless good of existence—was found!

I am free to admit, however, that without the powerful resource *Madeleine* found in the jealousy excited by my Lord Glengariff's oppo-

sition, it is not likely that the short interval she managed it in would have sufficed to mature her plans. For it was towards the end of the second week of Mr. Behringbright's enamoured sojourn at Killarney Town, that matters were brought to a crisis by this young nobleman's means, without his very much (possibly) intending it.

After haunting Miss Graham with noticeable assiduity, in pursuance of his self-imposed duties as cicerone of the lakes and mountains of Killarney, greatly to Mr. Behringbright's annoyance, though he seemed to make no progress with Madeleine, Lord Glengariff appeared—as is usual in such cases—only to grow more obstinate and eager in his advances. He presented himself with a frequency at Prospect Palace that excited general remark; and as he had made himself very useful and agreeable to Dr. Bucktrout, he was always at least welcome to the ostensible principal of the Madeleine party. Of course he thus greatly interfered with Mr. Behringbright's opportunities of private address to Miss Graham, otherwise not afforded him with any unwise profusion by the aunt. But anon Lord Glengariff took to endeavouring to *shine down* his rival, as it seemed, in a series of splendid diversions, which he projected and carried into execution; apparently with the view of amusing and dazzling the young lady into a better appreciation of his now undisguised admiration and partiality.

Perhaps in reality, besides another motive of sufficient power, Lord Glengariff was surprised and piqued into acts and displays much beyond his real incentives and purposes, by the extraordinary preference of which he beheld himself the victim. His self-love, already severely shaken by Emily's rejection, was irritated, perhaps, into an attempt at assertion against a repetition of so marvellous a defeat. A *repetition of defeat* his lordship still continued, it may be, to suspect it. He certainly meant nothing serious by Madeleine Graham, and yet he bestirred himself as anxiously now as if he did. And she, perceiving the advantage to her own purposes, skilfully accepted so much of the position assigned her as suited them—and no more. What fault could even Mr. Behringbright find—annoyed as he might be—with compliances that had their source in gratitude for a life preserved?

Madeleine, successful in inspiring Mr. Behringbright with the most passionate and trustful attachment, had come now to feel her foot strike against an unforeseen obstacle. Greatly as he loved her, the extreme diffidence and modesty of his own nature stood in his way to a declaration of his sentiments. He was convinced that she cherished a deep preference for him, but it occurred to himself as the height of presumption and impudence to take such a supposition for granted, and act upon it! He could not reconcile himself to his figure in the glass, to venture on a proceeding of the kind. Opportunities—judicious, *unmeant* opportunities—were afforded him; but he did not avail himself of them. Words half-formed came to his lips, but he did not utter them.

Madeleine grew tired of this, and determined to lose no chance of bringing matters to a crisis. When Lord Glengariff, therefore, proposed to entertain her with what he said was one of the finest spectacles on the Lakes—a Staghunt—she accepted the honour with unwonted alacrity, although she was certainly far from thinking that it would please Mr. Behringbright to know that she was to be made the object of so public a mark of homage. She informed him, however, of the intention in the most indifferent manner, and had the satisfaction to discern that he looked very much vexed and discomfited.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A PROPOSAL.

THAT night Mr. Behringbright made up his mind to propose the next day, at all hazards.

He began to feel his radiant prospects endangered. He comprehended a touch of disdain and indignation in the young lady's careless way of giving him the information; and the thought seized him, like the poisoned fang of an adder, that she was beginning to open her eyes to the superior personal qualities of his young rival. And what might not come of that?

It was dreadful to conjecture! And so, after tossing all night on a feverish pillow, Mr. Behringbright arose the next day, firmly resolved, as he thought, to put his hopes and fears to the proof—but almost as shaken and nervous at the prospect as if he was going to explore the great secret in a leap from a precipice.

I dare say he never thought so ill before of his little, twisted toilet-glass in the poor inn where he had taken up his domicile! It made him look so gray and old, and almost paralytic, really, on one side of the face! And yet what nonsense it was to dwell on these trifles. Was it not plain that, with all his faults, the beautiful Madeleine liked him—preferred him to all mankind? Had not her melting eyes said so many times now . . . and each time more persuasively and inebriatingly than before?

To be sure, those fine eyes had haunted him, Mr. Behringbright remembered, very uncomfortably in his dreams that night after he had parted at Prospect Palace with the fair owner, and she had informed him of her invitation to the staghunt.

It was a horrid nightmare fancy, no doubt; but Mr. Behringbright recalled with a shudder that he had seen those alluring organs of expression shining like jewels in the head of a crested serpent, that had persisted, during a course of miserable dreams, in coiling itself about his heart, and whose horrible weight had seemed to drag him down into a hideous gulf of darkness and terror.

A nonsensical fancy, no doubt; and Mr. Behringbright was aware that, visiting Prospect Palace rather hastily and huffily on hearing of the party

of pleasure arranged for the following day, he had supped wretchedly at his inn on a very tough *Welsh rabbit*. Quite enough to give any one an indigestion! And the pleading, recalling gaze with which Madeleine had followed him on his feverish exit might very naturally—no, not very naturally, but very possibly—cause all the rest!

Those who have had the good—but now not very usual—fortune of being present at a staghunt on the Lakes of Killarney—or rather the Lower Lake, for the poor victim of the sport rarely deserts its native mountain shore of the Toomies—are mostly of opinion that it is a very grand and exhilarating spectacle. The occasion usually assembles a gay and showily-dressed holiday multitude. The waters are covered with a bright flotilla of expectant gazers, attired in lively colours, with white sails spread, and fluttering pennons on the slender mastheads. If the mountains are in a good humour—and they mostly are on these occasions—they display their most gorgeous and changeable hues. The woods and misty summits of the hills—haunts of the startled animals which are to furnish the sport—resound with the shouts of the hunters driving them from their coverts, with the mellow notes of the horn, with the musical baying of the hounds; all repeated in a million cheerful echoes in the nearness—dying away to as many times repeated a ghostly and spiritual indistinctness in the distance.

Such was the scene Mr. Behringbright embarked in his accustomed wherry to join from the town, having been informed by Miss Graham that her uncle had accepted a seat for her and her aunt in Lord Glengariff's boat.

This was a handsome, galley-like barge, easily distinguished by its showy appearance on the Lower Lake, where the company chiefly assembled to witness the hunt. And Mr. Behringbright felt very uncomfortable indeed when he observed the young Lord in his chieftain's garb—and looking one every inch—seated beside Madeleine in the prow of the craft, making her share with himself the universal notice and distinction the presence of the great proprietor of the district and giver of the festivity naturally excited.

Mr. Behringbright experienced a strong twang of jealous apprehension, I say, when he witnessed this spectacle. Could anything be more likely to impose upon the fancy of a girl of taste and spirit than the showy aspect under which Lord Glengariff thus presented himself? A feeling of indignation and contempt at his own folly in having deprived himself of the claims to distinction and homage he also possessed in unbounded wealth, painfully struck Mr. Behringbright. He could resist the impulse no longer, and, ordering Darby O'Finn to drive his boat up to the "Lord's barge,"—a command with which the waterman very timorously and unwillingly complied—he addressed Lord Glengariff, for almost the first time since he had adopted his incognito, in the tone of a familiar and equal; announcing his intention, rather than wish merely, to

witness the hunt on board his Lordship's barge with his friends from Prospect Palace!

Lord Glengariff was, however, resolved that he should persevere in his assumed rôle, as it appeared. Or else he was more than a little out of temper, and willing to vent his pique. He answered Mr. Behringbright, in a surprised and haughty tone, that his party was made up, and that no more persons could be accommodated comfortably on board his galley—and he was turning the rudder, pettishly siding off, when—singularly pale—but determined and almost fierce in his tone and manner—Mr. Behringbright addressed the Cleopatra of the scene,—

"Since Lord Glengariff's accommodations are so limited and overcrowded, Miss Graham, will you do me the favour and pleasure to step on board my boat, and see the cruel amusement we are here to enjoy, from it?"

There was a pause.

The Glengariff rowers, six in number, and attired in a most picturesque livery of scarlet flannel shirts, and green velvet caps, held their oars suspended with amazement, dripping over the sunny waves that vainly courted the stroke. All the boats within hearing, in fact, listened; particularly that containing the Sparrowgrasses and some other persons from Prospect Palace Hotel. People were thunderstruck at such presumption and audacity on the part of that shabby sojourner! It was thought Miss Graham would laugh at the very idea of such an exchange! But, behold now, Miss Graham arose! stepped so rapidly from the barge to the boat, that there was no time afforded for interference, taking Mr. Behringbright's joyfully extended hand, and responded, in the hearing of all who chose to hear, "I shall be most happy; for I really don't like to be made such a complete exhibition of, Mr. Brownjohn!"

Mr. Behringbright was not often what we may call chivalrously gallant, but he was so in this instance. He absolutely knelt on one knee, and kissed the hand that continued locked in his, until he had comfortably seated the fair owner in her new quarters. He then coolly asked Dr. Bucktrout to oblige him by passing over Miss Graham's parasol, and seizing an oar himself, rowed off before Lord Glengariff could recover sufficiently from his surprise and indignation to give vent to those feelings in articulate sounds.

After such a public mark of devotion and adhesion, Mr. Behringbright certainly could not hesitate any longer to declare his own,—could not fear repulse for them. Yet he could hardly speak for agitation when, obeying his directions, Darby O'Finn and his aquatic daughter shot the boat that conveyed the four, under the broad shadow of the Toomias, remote as might be from the now crowding company, which all made for the central Glengariff galley.

"Do you speak French, Miss Graham?" Mr. Behringbright inquired, in those tremulous accents.

"A little: I had two or three quarters at school. But why do you ask, Mr. Brownjohn?"

"I want to tell you, without being understood by these good people, Miss Graham, how I thank you,—how I love you,—how I adore you—for your goodness in complying with my request, and rebuking the presumption and forwardness of the splendid young coxcomb who thought to parade you about as a conquest in the midst of his vassalage and these gaping strangers assembled to hear dogs bark, and a wretched four-legged creature run for its life from their fangs!"

"You owe me no thanks, Mr. Brownjohn; I merely followed my own inclination;—I may almost say merely obeyed an instinct, when I complied with your request," Madeleine replied, in very pure French, and with an expressive glance at the speaker.

"You preferred my society, then, to Lord Glengariff's,—young, gallant, highborn, handsome as he is?" said the delighted man.

"I prefer your society to that of all the world, Mr. Brownjohn!—I mean—I do not know what I mean! Let us say no more about it. I shall see the show, whatever it is, just as well under your guidance as Lord Glengariff's, and not form so unpleasantly conspicuous a part of it myself."

"You do not care for show and splendour then?—you could be content to become the wife of a poor man,—mine!—Could you, would you, ought you, Miss Graham?"

"*Your wife*, Mr. Brownjohn?"

"My wife!—I love you, dearest Madeleine!—I love you! My looks, my actions, my whole demeanour from the first moment I have seen you until this, must convince you so! And the step I have hazarded on this occasion can only be justified by my wish and intention to make you wholly, solely mine!" Mr. Brownjohn exclaimed. "Do you consent? Shall this day date the commencement of all the happiness of my life, *dearest Madeleine*?—I am not young, nor handsome, nor witty, nor all or anything I should be to deserve you! But I love you with all the powers of my soul and existence, and I will make yours happy, if it be in human power, and you will suffer me to devote my life to the task!"

"But are you aware of what you take upon yourself in the proposition, Mr. Brownjohn? My father would never forgive me for marrying a *poor man*; I know it; he has often said so. He is well off, but he has a large family—and would, perhaps, not be sorry for a reason to—If you *marry me* you burden yourself with the maintenance of a woman who will have no other means of support but such as your generosity and affection may provide," Madeleine said, in a tone of deep emotion, but extending her hand assentingly to her lover, who clasped it passionately to his breast.

No one can doubt what would follow.

"If this be the only difficulty, dearest Madeleine!" George Cocker *Behringbright* replied, "I am ashamed to confess it—but—but—I am

rich myself—very rich! I am head of the firm I only pretend to represent,—Behringbright Brothers. I am worth, perhaps, a million in money—Nothing in myself, excepting in the devoted love I bear you. Will you now indeed be mine?"

"You are making fun of me, Mr. Brownjohn, and it is wrong of you. And look, who are these people making towards us as if they knew me—you? Good heavens! Mr. Behringbright! Mr. Brownjohn! I am ill—so agitated. Do let them row me back to the hotel, or I believe I shall die! Do row me home at once, Mr. O'Finn, without a moment's delay!" Madeleine now exclaimed, turning in very truth most ghastly pale and panic-stricken in aspect, having caught sight of a boat in the offing, steering apparently towards them.

"Make for Prospect Palace instantly, Darby O'Finn, the young lady is ill!" said Mr. Behringbright; adding, after a moment's survey of the barque which had seemed approaching them, but was easily distanced by the vigorous strokes of Darby's oar—"I want to be off myself; for I declare there's that Frenchman again, with the detestable American who has such a causeless spite against me! But no," he added, after a slight pause of reflection, "I won't seem to run from either of the trumpery fellows; they will fancy next I am afraid of them, or am ashamed of my betrothed bride. Madeleine, dearest! Miss Graham! what makes you look so very ill?"

"Ever since that narrow escape from drowning I had, I take the most unaccountable panics on the water. Do, Mr. Behringbright, let us get to land!"

"But these men have threatened me; I must not seem to shun them,—and you see they seem to want to get up to us," said Mr. Behringbright, in whom a something was roused by this idea little akin to his customary phlegm.

Madeleine looked at him, and perceived that she must rally her courage to face the emergency; that there was no flying from it.

A good deal was certainly required—the courage almost of despair! There, in that approaching barque, Camille Le Tellier sat, no doubt; looking already a thousand recognitions, the least of which, put in utterance, might be the talismanic word to break into shivers all her splendid magic palace of glass, raised by the power of the great modern sorcerer, whose multiplied forms make truth itself a puzzle and a myth wherever we turn.

It is a great thing to be able to say of my heroine that she quailed not in the furnace-heat now applied to her lustrous inventions—stood to her arms with invincible resolution never to lay them down until they were beaten from her.

Nothing is baser than cowardly guilt. Even a Palmer, who plunges into Avernus with a hop, skip, and a jump from the gallows, dies the less execrated of mankind because of his undaunted bearing. And with all

her little faults, it cannot be denied that, of her nature, Madeleine Graham was brave, and defiant, and cool, and resolved, against adverse fortune.

To be sure she was tied now to the stake; and 'tis confidently averred, most of our greatest British victories have been won by desperation. We were making out of France, a hungry, half-starved, exhausted little rabble of us, when the French chivalry must needs throw themselves in our way, and, reason or none, force us to fight Crecy, Poitiers, Agincourt, what not? Waterloo itself, according to the best military authorities of that nation, who admit that it was lost at all, was only won through bad generalship having rendered it impossible for us to fly the field. That forest of Soignies in our rear saved us. Still, though a national characteristic, it was something wonderful, that thorough possession of nerve and imperturbable composure evinced by Miss Graham at this juncture—her command of feature, and, after a moment's wavering, even of complexion. Every stroke of the stranger's oar, when once Mr. Behringbright had desired Darby O'Finn and his daughter to cease their exertions, brought destiny nearer. But you would have said, from her careless glance and attitude, that Madeleine herself was as little concerned as any other young lady on the lake. Nay, she even said, finding no better could be done, "Oh, yes, sir, I don't mind now; I feel quite well again! But what Frenchman do you mean? One you have some dislike to?"

The intervening throng of boats, which had to be cautiously threaded, in fact gave time for quite a little conversation, and not of a kind calculated to allay anxiety in Miss Graham's bosom.

"The one you told me was engaged to Miss Emily Maughan in Belfast; a fellow who has twice besides crossed me in a very uncomfortable manner. Don't you know?"

"Engaged to Emily Maughan? Did I tell you so? No, I think I did not quite say that! I could not, for I did not know! I only thought so from what I had observed—from their way of meeting and going on—that they were in love with each other, and *ought* to be married, perhaps! I should not in the least wonder, indeed, but what, knowing you are here, and having finally made up her mind not to have Lord Glengariff—I suppose because she *dares not*—she has sent him to ask your consent to their union!"

Even as she said so, the conviction smote like a steam-hammer on Madeleine's heart that Camille was on the scene with a far different object. Either he had discovered that she was there, and had come to ascertain and thwart her projects, or—and the thought, in spite of the danger and destruction involved, almost made her burst out laughing—Mr. Behringbright himself was the "representative of Plutus" whom the romantic son of Gaul hoped to render favourable to the happy issue of his love affair with her!

Perhaps the ludicrousness of the notion supported Madeleine against its associated alarms. But she had all along, in fact, calculated almost

with certainty on Monsieur Le Tellier's acquiescence in any plan, even including her loss, which should present the great material advantages to herself she hoped to demonstrate to him in her securing the millionaire. Selfishness seldom estimates adequately the power of that amiable quality in others, and the intenser the selfishness, the more liable it is to mistakes of the kind. And now, though sufficiently vain in her own person, Madeleine had not properly estimated the sway of vanity in a French coxcomb. So that her chief alarm at this time related to the unprepared character of the interview about to take place. And the insinuation last hazarded was intended, as much as might be, to remedy this crude state of affairs on one side at least.

Mr. Behringbright was evidently impressed, though disagreeably, with the suggestion.

"I don't know whether he has come for my consent or not! I don't know that my consent could be needed! I have no species of control over Miss Maughan's wishes or actions; but if the right is conferred on me, I shall be strongly tempted to exercise it in a refusal! The man appears to me a vain, insolent strutter, altogether unworthy of any sensible Englishwoman's preference! Full of his nonsensical French notions on everything. He wanted to fight a duel with me, forsooth—though I never mentioned it before,—because I stumbled against him by accident on board that Belfast steamer; and the American who is with him did all he possibly could to keep alive the mischief, and bring the homicidal absurdity to pass between us."

"Oh, what a wretch! How strange! Would Monsieur Le Tellier really have fought you? I did not think he had been such a lion!" said Madeleine; who, in truth, was rather incredulous as to the leonine qualities of her discarded sentimentalist, but managed thus to insinuate rather a pretty compliment.

"Do you think it needs something so ferociously valiant to beard me, Miss Graham?" said Mr. Behringbright, smiling. "Well, we shall see; we do not yet know whether these good people's intents are wicked or charitable."

"Oh, I don't believe much in his valour," said Madeleine. "Emily has told me he was quite frightened off when the Miss Sparxes threatened to set the police at him, for haunting after our school when we walked out. And Lord Glengariff says that he screamed and squealed out like a child when he threatened in fun to throw him over into the pit, that night you rescued him from the mob at the theatre. How curiously you seem always to have been so good to him—and Lord Glengariff to have taken a sort of instinctive dislike to him—from the very first! But you must continue good to him, dear Mr. Brownjohn, and if we are to be happy together, do try and make poor Emily happy also with the man of her choice!"

The melting expression—the captivating "dear Mr. Brownjohn,"

which seemed to have forgotten again that it was addressed to a man of money—put Mr. Behringbright in a good humour, and in a position of stability and unsuspicion, as regarded his own affairs, for the approaching interview.

Nor was this altogether a mere vague suggestion. It had crossed Madeleine's mind of late, not unfrequently, how very convenient it would be—how completely several dangerous implications might be coiled up safely—if Emily *would* marry Camille!

Lord Glengariff was, of course, out of the question: explanations there would be fatal. Not to mention that Miss Graham had a true young lady feeling in the matter besides, and could not bear the idea of a contemporary securing so much more splendid, though not so valuable a prize in the matrimonial lottery. And as Emily must soon be desperate as regarded Mr. Behringbright—had hopelessly excluded herself from competition with the young Earl,—perhaps, rather than sink altogether into old-maidism, she could be brought to think of Camille.

Camille, Madeleine said to herself, was a very handsome and agreeable young man. She knew she had thought so once,—was not certain whether she did not think so still. And a fair pretext would thus arise to secure him—and the friend of her youth—a satisfactory provision from the resources and influence of the millionaire merchant. All would thus be most delightfully dove-tailed—or serpent-tangled—for future intimacy, and a commerce of visits and good offices.—A romance of friendly alliance, in which the simple, spiritless Emily would play the part of Monsieur Eugène Sue's *Mathilde* to her own brilliant and gifted *Ursule*, with the difference that all the advantages of fortune and position would be on her side too. Fictitious creations, it would appear, can have their Don Quixotes of imitation in evil as well as good—female as well as male.

Such were the reflections that passed in electric touches through that rapid intellect, whose powers had been so fearfully misdirected by education and the perverse influences of the organized frenzy miscalled society!

Meanwhile, the Frenchman and American made up to the evident object of pursuit at all the speed a single-oared, crazy boat could manage it, through the pressure of the pleasure-seeking fleet, all set in a contrary direction.

Rather, perhaps, against the wish of the former, who observed to his companion, "Yes, yes; I suppose it is he! But, *ma foi*! do you not perceive he has a lady with him? I do not wish to interrupt him at an unpropitious moment! Let us also behold the spectacle, and, satisfied that he is still in the mountains, accost him at a more disengaged instant!"

"Pho, pho! there is no moment in all eternity like the present one! Clip its wings if you can! But by all the stars in heaven, and on Ameriky's flag of freedom, don't you see the lady's the one you make such a caterwauling about? The one we saw on board the Belfast steamer, and you tell such fine stories of, when you have half a rag of a French tatter

of liquor in the wind! Sitting cheek by jowl with him, as friendly as Britannia and Neptune on the price of a wooden leg! And they see us—and don't like the look of us, as sure as my great grandmother was a red-legged turkey!"

"It is Mr. Behringbright Brothers! That I perfectly perceive. But the other? the lady? No, it is impossible! I should be certain to know if she had left her father's house: she takes no step without my approbation. Neither was she at all aware I should find myself at Killarney this season; accordingly, she cannot have prepared me a delightful surprise! It is impossible!" returned Camille; for he it was.

"If you don't spy her out and recognize her, it is because you Frenchmen can only see well through an opera-glass! But I *thought* it was all bosh and boast, what you said about that 'are out-and-out young *beautier* on board the steamer. You picked her out as the handsomest crittur you saw there, and romanced all the other lies!"

"It is only that I cannot believe my eyes, not that I do not see her well!" exclaimed the astonished Frenchman, whose orbs of vision were now certainly strained towards the boat containing his lady-love and her elder suitor, like those of a boiled crab. "And yet—and yet it is Madeleine! With Mr. Behringbright! What a marvellous coincidence!"

"I don't see the wonder myself. It's all just as I told you it would be," returned the American, with a jangling laugh. "Old Moneybags has seen what a pretty girl she is—and she has found out what a rich old churl *he* is. Put those two ideas together, and everything is accounted for, if you had found them at the end of Rosse's telescope in the moon!"

"Let us verify the fact! Make all possible diligence with your oar, young man, and I promise you a reward," said Camille, now considerably agitated, to the boatman.

"They're not a-moving, your honor; we shall soon be upon them: but I must mind and not get my own nose broken—leastways the boat's,—as I did the other day, against a rock, which has rendered her sides rather weak," returned the conscious boatman, who knew that his shallop had only turned out for that gala day, after lying by disabled for years.

"Don't drown us, certainly," said Camille. "And my feet are already quite wet in your leaky affair!" eyeing his beautifully-polished, high-heeled little boots with dismay.

"You *can't* drown me, Britisher! I'll defy you to it! I can swim like an alligator. I've crossed the Mississippi twice where its cataract thunders into the Oroonoko, swimming without drawing my breath! And I used to regularly slide down Niagara Falls every morning before breakfast for an appetite, while I was at Saratoga!" returned the American.

"Ha! ha! ha! Behold the genius of your country again! Colossal in *everything*!" complimented Le Tellier.

"Even in *lies*, d'y'e mean?" returned Flamingo, rather fiercely and bullyingly. But by this time they were close on the Behringbright boat.

It will thus be seen that Madeleine was quite right in her conjecture, funny and improbable as it seemed. She knew, and had often, of latter times, secretly scorned and derided the high-flown sentimentalities and impracticabilities of her French lover. She had heard him more than once labour to persuade her that his and her case almost exactly resembled that of the unfortunate Julie and St. Preux, in the "*Nouvelle Héloïse*;" and what more likely than for him to carry out the romantic delusion, and fancy a *Milor Edouard Bomston* in the Englishman who had rescued him at the playhouse? The resemblance was even sustained by the circumstance of his having almost fought a duel with that generous stranger!

"It is true I have chastised the English insolence, and disregard for the feelings of more susceptible nationalities, in Behringbright Brothers," he remarked to Mr. Flamingo Brown, on the latter accidentally rejoining him in the course of a conjoint commercial movement in Cork, and forcing himself on his confidence. "But the English—admirers always of courage—readily pardon even offences against themselves due to it. Witness that Mr. Behringbright, who takes part with me in a playhouse disturbance, against one of his dearest friends! Does not a Britannic poet of celebrity make the remark, 'What we plant, we love to water'? He is immensely rich, *we* are deplorably poor in everything but love. *Tenez!* he has only to know how to use his wealth to create happiness, and all the world knows he is willing to do it. Veritable son of perfidious but *goodnatured* Albion, he has only to know of the misfortunes of two lovers, one of whom is almost indebted to him for his life, who adore each other, and are persecuted by fortune, to fly to their succour!"

Luckily for the private views of the female of this pair of persecuted doves, Camille Le Tellier had been confined to his bed for a day or two by the consequences of the fright he had sustained in the Belfast row. He was very nervous and sensitive, and though he was willing enough to thrust himself into mischief, speedily lost his sage's perpendicular at a much less matter than the heavens crumbling over head, and the earth rolling away beneath his feet; therefore, his body was not in readiness so soon as his mind to execute the notable project he very quickly conceived. And Mr. Behringbright had departed on his Killarney trip before—diligently searching him out under his assumed name of Brownjohn—Camille ascertained, by the directions left to forward his letters, he had gone on a visit to Glengariff Castle. By a coincidence very flattering to his hopes, business would also take Le Tellier soon to the south of Ireland, and he determined to avail himself of the opportunity to put his project to the touch. Delayed beyond his expectation in one or two cities, he yet *expected to arrive in time on the lakes to overtake a pleasure-seeker, as he*

supposed Mr. Behringbright to be; and, it would appear, was not much mistaken.

As for Flamingo Brown, I do not suppose the mere love of mischief would have sufficed to lure so keen a "calkulator" off his proper ground in commercial cities, had he not had a business motive in the transaction.

He had lighted on a speculation recently in which he perceived, to his intense regret, that without the assistance of some great English capitalists he should miss a very nice thing. Behringbright Brothers were of the greatest, and if he could only effect a reconciliation with the head of that firm, all would go well. And so, with immense confidence in his own powers of persuasion and "hocussing" the world in general, and almost as much in the placability and tolerance of the John Bull division of it, Flamingo took up the notion of accompanying his young French friend to Killarney Lakes, and taking a signal part in the projected reconciliation on his own score.

Accordingly there was a great change to be witnessed in the Yankee's demeanour on this occasion.

He saluted Mr. Behringbright on approaching with a familiarity which he doubtless intended to efface all recollections of former rudeness. "Mr. Behringbright! this is a lucky chance to meet you here! Out on a little recreation from the desk, I suppose, like your humble servant? Fine country this, isn't it, on a small scale? Quite remarkable!"

Mr. Behringbright made a very cold reply. "It is not every nation that has a continent to stretch its limbs in—and not content then, Mr. Brown, or more of you would stay at home! But Miss Graham thought somebody in your boat wished to speak with her—or me—and that is why we stopped. Else she is not well, and wishes to go ashore."

Mr. Behringbright's eye was at the same time fixed with curious—in good truth, with somewhat alarmed attention, on the young Frenchman. Camille had bared his head with national politeness on nearing the boat with the lady in it, but now sat staring with unmistakeable signs of wonder and dismay.

On her part, however, that young lady had cordially—but with young lady-like unconcern and indifference—stretched her neatly-gloved little hand—she was very particular in her gloves—towards the French gentleman.

"How are you, Monsieur Le Tellier?" she said, with the prettiest kindness, but with evident distance too, in her manner, and with a smiling indifference and unconsciousness in her eyes that quite petrified him as he met the glance. "Have you left all well in Belfast? I know I must not ask you if you have been in Belhaven Square lately. But how is dear Emily? All well there? At least, 'all's well that ends well,' there as elsewhere, I suppose!—Come pleasuring to the Lakes, in the hope of finding a certain person at Glengariff again? Well, I hope you

will enjoy it more than I do, though uncle was so kind as to bring me on a little fishing turn-out with him. I have been nearly drowned, you know; and the uproar and tumult here to-day are too much for me, and his gentleman is kindly taking me home out of it."

"I should have pleasure, Miss Graham, if——" stammered Camille; but Madeleine interrupted him, saying, with a significance that required the most delicate modulation *not* to be appreciated where she did not wish it to be so, "Oh no: Mr. Brownjohn is my father's *particular friend*, and does not care for the trouble! And, as I have found out, he is *dear Emily's* particular friend—almost guardian—too: so if you have anything to say to me from home, Mr. Le Tellier, I shall be happy to render you all the service in my power . . . if you will call upon us some time when my uncle is within. We are staying at Prospect Palace, and Dr. Bucktrout is not so nonsensically prejudiced as papa, and will be glad to see you—and so, I am sure, shall I—for dear Emily's sake!"

Camille stared, lost in wonder, but haunted and withheld by confused recollections of the understanding between himself and Madeleine that the name of Emily should be used as a sort of symbolical one of the occult understanding really existing between themselves. In the midst of this confusion it seemed to him, therefore, that all he needed really attend to was the fact that he was invited to an interview in which, no doubt, satisfactory explanations would be offered of all that was strange and unaccountable in what he witnessed. Accordingly he bowed deeply, with graceful cringe à la Française, remarking, "I shall be most happy to make the acquaintance of *Miss's uncle!*" and the interview, so far as regarded him, appeared to be over.

Flamingo Brown, however, burst into one of his coarse laughs, and inquired, "And are *you* staying too, Mr. Behringbright, or Brownjohn, or what's your name, my dear sir, at Prospect Palace?"

"Does it concern you to know of my whereabouts, Mr. Brown?" the other replied, with evident dryness and stiffness.

"Yes; I've a first-rate business matter to put before your house—which is as good as reaping gold—when you've time, sir. And this young gentleman, Monsieur Le Teller, has also, as he tells me——"

The art of interrupting is a great one. "Monsieur Le Tellier can speak English, sir—and this, I believe, is not quite a matter for the open air!" exclaimed Madeleine, colouring partly with fear, and partly with indignation at the risks Camille's imprudent confidence seemed now likely to occasion.

Luckily, Mr. Behringbright was on some points not quite a business man. Once deceived, no man ever regained his confidence; whereas a complete man of business expects to be cheated and overreached sometimes, and readily sacrifices personal resentment to views of profit.

"I have already more than once told you, sir, that I will never again

join in any transaction to which you may be a party. And I never will I beg you to believe me in earnest, without the necessity of going before a magistrate to make an affidavit to the effect," he said.

"What! is it still on about those darned skins?" roared the Yankee. "I wish they were all sunk to the bottom of the sea, for the cursed noise you make about it! And if some score of you cantankerous British capitalists, as you call yourselves, was sewed up in them——"

"Row home, Darby!" said Mr. Behringbright, turning scornfully away.

"To Prospect Palace? Do you reside at Prospect Palace? Shall I find you there?" Monsieur Le Tellier now called out—also in a somewhat menacing and challenging tone.

"Have you any particular business with me, sir?" returned Mr. Behringbright.

"Certainly I have, sir."

"Then you will find me—when you want me—at the 'Red Herring' tavern, a little out of Killarney on the Glengariff Road, where I stay. Or if the affair is very pressing you may out with it now, if you please," said the irritated millionaire.

"No, dear sir," interrupted Madeleine, with an expressive gesture to Camille, which he understood as she would have him. "I think I am a little concerned in this. It is not a matter, indeed, for hasty consideration in the open air. And I think I shall prove a better mediator with my father's most esteemed friend than Mr. Brown—or even Monsieur Le Tellier himself—when I am put in proper possession of the facts by-and-bye! And now, sir," she added in a whisper to Mr. Behringbright, which only he could overhear, "do go off now; I really am very faint and ill. And I should not like dear Emily's name to be dragged into discussion before so many listeners."

Tired of the scene himself, Mr. Behringbright readily complied with this intimation, raising his hat civilly, but almost exclusively to the Frenchman, who responded with a Parisian flourish. Madeleine smiled at Camille also, as her companion turned to give directions, much more cordially and significantly than before, and with a suitable glance. And away went Darby O'Finn, plying his oars as fast as the fins of a sword-fish, and propelling the boat accordingly, so that Madeleine and Mr. Behringbright speedily disappeared in the distance.

Camille was certainly a little puzzled and annoyed, but not so much, either, as his American friend wished him. For hardly was the manoeuvre described effected, than he turned to him, and, bursting into a huge, coarse cachinnation, exclaimed, "And that's the young damsel you pretend doats on you in secret! Very secret indeed; for I'll be sworn on the handsomest bound British Bible, or Peerage, you'll produce, she is quite ignorant of it herself, and scarcely knows you from Adam! Or if she

does, has as surely made up her mind to cut you and marry that tough old Dutchman, there, as anything in the multiplication table!"

"Ah, you injure me by the supposition! It is necessary for her to dissemble always, under witnesses, as I have told you. But you perceived with what art she invited me to an interview and explanations?" replied Camille; but with visibly uneasy query, and self-doubt in his manner.

"You're a gone 'coon if you believe in such sly gammon as that! She only wanted to shuffle you off out of sight of her new prize. Women beat all the eels in creation for slipperiness! You fancy you have them in your basket, and they are a mile off in the mud!" taunted the Yankee. "If you want me to believe you are anything else but a vain talker and boaster, mounseer, you will do something to let all the world, and master Pokerback in particular, see she *is yours*—and sha'n't be anybody else's! Be hanged, if *you* don't, if *I* don't tell the gal herself what fine things you report of her; and I'm much mistaken if she has not such a spice of the devil in her as will season your pottage for you many a day after the diskivery!"

Camille turned rather pale. "I have long thought it might be a necessary step," he replied; "otherwise I do not see how it is possible to extort the consent of her wealthy family. But, as you say, I shudder when I consider the consequences of offending a woman of so much spirit and determination. Nevertheless, if I imagined myself made the sport of a perfidy truly so monstrous and inexplicable, except on the least worthy supposition, I also am capable of great things! I also understand the meaning of the word—VENGEANCE!"

"I'll tell you how you can let her understand she is not to make such a complete ass of you—that she is known to be compromised with you, and can't use you as a stepping-stone to her millionaire! *Send me as your friend* to ask these promised explanations of her. That will settle her feathers to the right speckle, you may depend upon it; and I'll bring you a *krect* report of the situation, which you would never see with your own eyes, under such blinkers as she'll clap at once on your head, I'll wager any number of Connecticut razors against a grindstone!"

"*Tenez!* It is not a bad idea—and you shall be satisfied of the verity of the revelations I have confided to your friendship, Mr. Brown! As for your own sagacity, it is beyond dispute. Well, we will see, we will see! Give me an interval for reflection. In truth, it is advisable to reflect with great maturity of judgment before compromising one's self in the relations that may exist between one and a woman like *Mees Madeleine Graham!*"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

BREAKERS AHEAD.

MEANWHILE, escaped by her great presence of mind and coolness from immediate danger, but thoroughly aware that it was only a temporary security unless she could strike in some closer rivets, Miss Graham and her convoy landed safely; traversed the neatly laid-out walks of myrtle and arbutus between the Upper Lake and Prospect Palace, and, arm in arm, entered that excellent hotel. But, acquainted with the niceties of her lover's humour, the young lady by no means invited him up to her uncle's private apartments; informing a waiter, whom they surprised draining a lot of bottles, which had contained various liquids, into his mouth, on a landing-place, that they wished to be shown into the public room. Still, as there was nobody there, everybody being abroad at the Stag-hunt, indecorum was saved, and one place was just as suitable for the purpose as another for the nonce.

In this seclusion, of course Mr. Behringbright could do no less than renew, in fuller and more unmistakable terms—if that were possible—his offer of marriage, his assurances of love and devotion, and of his perfect ability to *keep a wife*,—not only in comfort and ease, but in the utmost splendour of affluence and luxury.

Now, as has been previously remarked, Mr. Behringbright was not naturally eloquent, except in business matters. I am of opinion, indeed, that his ideas were seldom particularly worth clothing in the magnificence of expression, excepting in business matters; and there brocade was superfluous, and he certainly never used it. He came rather an unpractised hand to the kind of work, therefore,—and Madeleine herself frequently smiled in secret at the contrast of her Anglo-Dutchman's modest and sober style of wooing, with the flighty exaltations and sentimentalities of her French lover,—which, however, interpreted themselves into something very different in practice. But the finest flowers of Parisian rhetoric shrunk into very poor weeds indeed, in comparison with the glitter and glow of a British *sovereign-tree* in full bearing. And Apollo himself might have warbled to his lute on one side, while Madeleine would have turned to the other to hear that she should do what she liked with a *million of money!*

With or without eloquence, everything was arranged to the satisfaction of the parties in this memorable interview: and what could Demosthenes, and Cicero, and Pitt, and Mr. Fox, all thundering together, have effected more?

It was agreed, that from their first meeting on board the Belfast steamer to that moment, Madeleine Graham and her now accepted suitor had felt an irresistible liking towards each other. Combated on the one side only by apprehension that it was impossible he could achieve so

harming and youthful a creature's personal regard; without which, Mr. Behringbright declared he should never have entertained the idea of recommending himself to her favour. On the other, by the belief that Mr. Brownjohn's condition, as a mere travelling commercial agent, would preclude the hope of an union with the consent of Miss Graham's parents, without which that dutiful child could never think of marriage. Nay, Mr. Behringbright had almost, in the overflow of his heart, proclaimed his conviction that he had fallen in love with his adored long previously, on an occasion not likely to have escaped the reader's memory. But the delicate associations of that circumstance restrained him, and, greatly to Madeleine's own satisfaction, he reserved the avowal for another time. Still, the main preliminaries were accepted as proven, and it followed as a matter of course, that Mr. Behringbright now announced his determination to lose no time in making his real rank and position known to Sir Orange and Lady Graham, and asking at their hands the greatest blessing mortal man can ask of Heaven,—a loving, beautiful, and virtuous wife!

Madeleine's mind ran all the time, meanwhile, how to secure her rear, as well as to advance her main battle in the success thus far achieved. A grand object was to prevent all danger of a premature interview between her late and present favoured lovers. Considerable risk, it was evident, existed.

It was not enough that she obtained a promise from Mr. Behringbright to make his pretensions known at once to her uncle and aunt, and to accompany her, as speedily as she could herself arrange, home to Belfast, to ask her father's consent, and complete the whole happy arrangement. An untutored expression from Camille—the exposition of romantic hopes he meditated—would be sufficient to topple down the whole castle of cards. And his wonder and anxiety were evidently awakened, and might throw him at once on some imprudent demonstration.

Madeleine bethought herself of a plan.

In the midst of the interchange of tender assurances and vows, a shadow came over her bright expression. "But Lord Glengariff," she exclaimed, "Oh, *poor* Lord Glengariff!—what will he think of our behaviour to him to-day, dear Mr. Behringbright?—so rude, so very unkind—when he had contrived it all to do me pleasure and honour! And he saved my life, too! Oh, dear sir, nothing but the knowledge of our feelings towards each other—of how we stand towards each other—now can excuse us. Do let him know it all at once."

"But Lord Glengariff will not be much comforted by the information, Madeleine, dearest, since it is so evident he was courting you for himself!" the accepted suitor replied, struck almost with a feeling of incredulity at his own good fortune as he said so.

"Oh, no, it was all nonsense—merely something to amuse away his vexation at Emily Maughan's preference for another—for that Frenchman we saw to-day," returned Madeleine; and she believed herself, and spoke

as if she did. "I am sure his lordship will be quite happy to hear that we are engaged to each other, . . . for, don't be angry, dearest, . . . it is not many days ago since he as good as warned me to beware of your designs upon me, and expressed his fears—which puzzled me amazingly at the time—that your intentions were not honourable. Nobody knows what he will think or say now unless you undeceive him. He may, perhaps, do or say something on the provocation that may disturb your friendly relations for life,—and I am sure his poor mother has trouble enough already. But what I am thinking of more than anything besides is this, that if he comes to Killarney, and finds this Frenchman here, he will immediately suspect his business with you; and he being such a passionate young man, and the other, you say, a professed duellist, they are certain to run their heads against each other, and something horribly stupid will happen in the fighting way. Don't you think so?"

"It is not unlikely," said Mr. Behringbright, considerably struck with this very natural apprehension, and not ill-pleased with the assurance presented of Lord Glengariff's real motives in his recent conduct;—"but what can I do to prevent it?"

"Go at once to Glengariff—at least, as soon as the sport on the lake is over—and it cannot last much longer now,—and explain all, and induce him to remain there; meanwhile, uncle and I will persuade Monsieur Le Tellier that he cannot leave his cause in better hands than ours to plead with you;—for I am all but certain he has come to beg your assistance in establishing them together in life, which, I think, you will allow me to promise him?—and get him to go on his affairs away from here, until we can settle the affair to everybody's mind. Emily's mother must be asked, and all that, you know. And, besides, dear Mr. Behringbright! after what has occurred so publicly . . . it would be best . . . it would be proper . . . (and there she blushed very naturally), that you should stay away from me a little while—should not, at least, be found with me alone when people come back . . . And hark! now I think by the shouts the poor stag must be taking to the water, and it must be soon over with it there, among such a lot of brutes in the boats to drive it back upon the dogs!"

Mr. Behringbright glanced from the lofty windows—which he had thrown open to give his syren air—and was so particularly struck by what he then witnessed of the spectacle enacting on the watery expanse below, that he even arose from his almost adoring attitude beside the young beauty, to gaze forward and consider it.

The windows of the principal public room at Prospect Palace, where the loving pair had found refuge, overlooked—for good eyes—the entire Lower Lake. You could see as far as where the shores narrowed in to form the peninsula of Muckross, and the close, rocky channel between its jutting headland and the mountains descending from the Gap of Dunloe on the left.

This scene had now in itself reached an extraordinary effulgence of beauty under the meridian glories of the sun, which made the whole lake shine like a sheet of silver set in a frame of the intensest cerulean blue. All the primitive colours seemed, in fact, displayed, as in some vast cut glass, through the watery atmosphere. Innisfallen Island glowed like a great emerald filigreed with its woods in the midst of the lake, and the mountains exhibited an almost infinite variety of shades on their sides and summits, from brightest pea-green to the saddest purple. But, in addition, these natural splendours were animated by the sparkle of a thousand oars, the flutter of a thousand parti-coloured flags, the rapid movement of the entire flotilla of boats, which Mr. Behringbright perceived was converging with great rapidity towards the Toomies shore. But this was not what so particularly attracted his attention; which was that, at the very moment he looked towards the spectacle, what he perceived, even at that distance, to be Lord Glengariff's barge, rowed right across the line of view, and the branching head of a stag appeared, fuming with terror, and blowing the water up in a foam beyond it.

Mr. Behringbright knew that it was considered very dangerous to cross the way of one of these powerful animals when driven to frenzy and desperation—as the stag always is when it betakes itself in flight to so uncongenial an element. He looked, therefore, to see the barge recede, so as to allow the maddened creature to pass. But his attention was riveted by seeing that, far from this being the case, a figure standing upright in the boat seemed by its impatient gestures to urge the rowers right on the animal's advance. And he recognized this figure to be Lord Glengariff, by the gleam of a hunting knife in his hand, which he remembered he carried, as a part of his chieftain's costume, sheathed in his girdle, just as Madeleine—who had also risen—exclaimed,—

“Dear me! I hope his lordship is not going to be so foolish! He told me he would kill the stag himself, to show me that there was something money could not enable a man to do—and send me the antlers as a trophy. Ah! what has happened there?”

What had happened? At that great distance it was impossible to discern distinctly, but something of a strange and horrible nature seemed to occur. A dreadful cry of dismay came audibly to land—a movement of infinite uproar and confusion took place around the barge; after which, the whole sweep of boats behind it seemed to open, and scud off in all directions, as if in the wildest consternation! The cries of alarm were redoubled; and a moment after, the branches of the stag appeared rising nearer in the waters, as if from beneath the Glengariff barge, and making towards the opposite shore!

Mr. Behringbright snatched up a telescope—part of the furniture of the apartment.

“The creature's throat is cut!” he exclaimed. “Glengariff has fulfilled his boast—the waves crimson every time the poor beast breathes them!”

"But where is Glengariff himself? Does not something seem wrong there in the barge?" inquired Madeleine.

"There! it makes its last leap—and sinks! They will have to draw for the antlers! What a strange gift to make to a lady!" said Mr. Behringbright.

"But don't you really think there's something amiss in the Glengariff barge? I don't see Lord Glengariff now; and how they all seem clustered round something lying on the gunwale!" persisted Madeleine.

The telescope was readjusted. "It does seem rather queer indeed," said Mr. Behringbright, greatly disturbed. "Whatever can it mean? Waiter! come here! But it seems all right again; they are rowing towards Glengariff. No, they are not! They all of them seem quite busy round some one lying down in the boat. Rooney, what is the meaning of all this?"

The waiter who had been draining the bottles, himself attracted by the uproar, now approached the window, and, privileged by Mr. Behringbright's handing him the telescope, immediately delivered an authoritative dictum.

"Some accident I should say, sir, for sartin, sure-ly! Those craft are worse than mad bulls when their horns are hot! I hope it isn't his lordship, the O'Donoghue, come to grief, though he's so venturesome, or the murder's out about the wailing of the banshee which the Princess has been hearing this month past, they say!"

"I hope not, indeed!" said Mr. Behringbright, turning very pale.

"My uncle is on board, and—and may be useful!" murmured Madeleine. "Indeed, I almost think that he's binding something—it almost seems like a strip of sail—round something. But they are rowing back to Glengariff: I should think all *must* be right!"

"Here's a boat making shore as fast as she can; perhaps *she* may know!" suggested the waiter.

"Run and ask! lose not a moment!" exclaimed Mr. Behringbright.

The man disappeared, and they speedily discerned him running down the walk to the landing-place. A painful pause then ensued; such a pause as the mind instinctively discerns precedes some thunderclap or evil tidings!

Unluckily, Rooney's careful clearance of the bottles had disqualified him for immediate rapid motion. He proceeded on his mission in a very strange sort of a zigzag—stumbled more than once—and the general consequence was that Mr. Behringbright, losing patience, was about to take the road for information in person, when Madeleine caught him by the arm, and begged him, in accents he could not but feel irresistible, not to leave her.

"I am so agitated! I am sure something dreadful has happened! Do, Mr. Behringbright, stay; if I am to depend upon you for my future protection and support!"

The truth is, she had discerned that the approaching boat conveyed Camille Le Tellier and his American friend.

She did really look very ill and terrified, as she had reason; and, deeply touched with pity and love, Mr. Behringbright drew his arm round her waist, and supported her back to her chair.

"What is there in the whole world of worth or value to me compared with my dearest girl?" said Mr. Behringbright, in the tenderest words he had, perhaps, ever before used to mortal woman—so the reader may judge he was no great matter of a love-speechifier. But there was more real and genuine passion in the words than in the flightiest ebullition, perchance, of the gallant lady-killing Camille; and, quite vanquished by the overmastering sentiment that swelled in his honest heart, he drew Madeleine fondly to his breast, and imprinted his first kiss of love upon her pale and trembling lips, precisely at the moment when a stranger entered the apartment, whose long legs and rapid stride had distanced all heralding from the landing-place.

It was Flamingo Brown! but, luckily, Flamingo Brown alone.

Something resembling that snarl of the hyena which some naturalists will have it is a laugh, burst from Mr. Brown—and it was plain *that he had seen what he had seen*.

Mr. Behringbright looked confused, but also angry. Madeleine, for a moment, thought that all was lost; but seeing the man alone, she instantly resumed courage.

"Has something happened of an unpleasant nature on the water, sir?" she inquired, trying to look no more concerned than any other young lady in such a position—and succeeding.

"Rather; a few; not quite so *pleasant* as on land, I guess, Miss!" Flamingo replied, with another odious laugh. "But it's no business of mine, that I know of—as yet; so don't look such thunders at me, Mr. Behringbright! I've not come here on my own hook, but another party's. . . . Miss, if you please——"

"What does the fellow mean?" inquired the millionaire, with a stern glare at the intruder.

"Perhaps I'll tell you, but not at present; by-and-bye, when I know better myself! Meanwhile, this here room is for public enjoyment, I'm given to understand, and all the big looks of all the capitalists in the world sha'n't turn me out of it. All I want is to speak with Miss in private, if she pleases, on a little matter of business, which won't keep very long—if she's of opinion she can do me the honour!"

"It is on his friend's affair, I suppose, Mr. Behringbright; I will speak with Mr. Brown in private, please—if you give me leave," said Madeleine, in great distress both in appearance and in reality. And indeed, in spite of all her skill in management, her affairs were getting into a very uncomfortable imbroglio, and were likely to become more *complicated still*—Mr. Behringbright turning with a very fierce and

restive look on Flamingo,—when the waiter staggered in to the relief, li
a proper *Deus ex machina*, supposing the *Deus* to be a Bacchus.

“Lord preserve us! Such news—such news, sir!”

“What news?—what is the matter, man?”

“The O’Donoghue’s fairly kilt and murdered itself entirely! The stag’s gored him in the breast, and he was as good as dead and buried before they brought him to land, and the scree of the banshee is out!”

“Good heavens!”

“Wal, I heard there was somebody hurt—not killed out and out; but who’s the *O’Donoghue*?—what’s the meaning of a name like that, what’s *The* before it?” said Flamingo, staring with all his yellow, bloodshot eyes.

“It is Lord Glengarriff!—Oh, go and see what is the matter! Tell the surgeons, Mr. Behringbright! No, you shall not go by water. Rooney a jaunting-car instantly. You will have to go round by Killarney for the doctors!”

Madeleine really was shocked, and indeed horrified by the sudden intelligence; but she did not forget the advisability of keeping Mr. Behringbright out of the way of Camille, in case he should be remaining anywhere near in his boat.

Mr. Behringbright’s mind was, however, too much taken up by these disastrous tidings to attend to much else.

“Thank you, dearest!—A car, Rooney, as fast as you can;—a guinea if you’re ready in five minutes! Good God! what a calamity! His mother will not survive the shock! I will send you word instantly, dear Miss Graham, of what has happened. Meanwhile, go to your own apartment, and save yourself from vulgar intrusion.”

“It is for *Emily’s* sake,” murmured Madeleine. “I shall be quite safe. Look, everybody is coming back! But every moment may be of value to save that good, generous young man who saved my life! Do go, do go!”

Mr. Behringbright was too much stricken with apprehension himself to delay an unnecessary moment, and complied, with a warm pressure of his betrothed’s hand defiantly to his heart, while Flamingo Brown looked on with a jeering scowl.

Madeleine, however, would not suffer him to leave until Rooney re-entered, breathless, to announce that there was a conveyance ready at the hotel door, with their best horse—leastways, mare—Flyaway Jib, “in the ropes.” For the phraseology of the good old times of Ireland survived in the common speech of the ostlers, though leather harness had long since superseded the former approved Celtic style of tackling in the shafts.

She even saw Mr. Behringbright down the hotel stairs, and safely upon the conveyance; then she turned, and bravely and unquiveringly re-entered the apartment she had left, to face this impudent intruder, in whom she instinctively recognized a foe; but in spite of all his uncomfortable craft and insolence, she felt herself a match for him.

THE ST. JAMES'S MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER, 1863.

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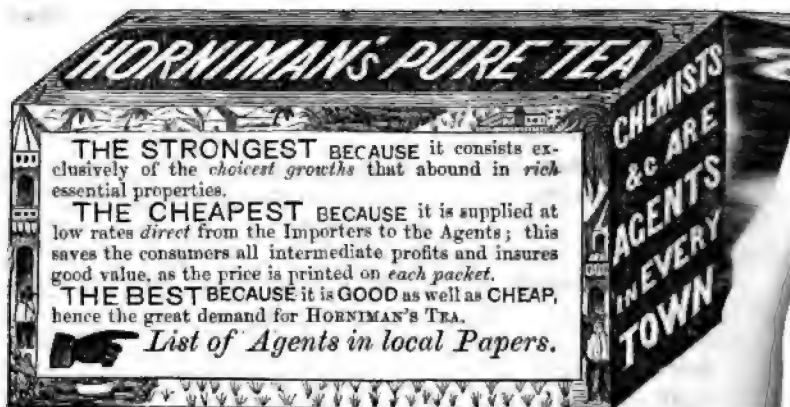
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AUBREY MARSTON

OR, A GAME OF SPECULATION.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MY LAST VISIT TO DE MAINTENON LODGE.

THE hour of six rang out from the belfry of De Maintenon Lodge as I passed into the courtyard, which seemed more blank and solitary than ever, and echoed ominously the sound of my footsteps. "Well, the old clock, at least, keeps time as true as ever," said I, as I compared my watch with the hour just struck, and somewhat inclined to believe in the influence of good and evil omens. I entered the house with a feeling of cheerfulness and hope, as if destined to learn something from the lips of Sir Bedford on that evening which should restore the old confidence and friendship which had formerly subsisted between us.

Rushton received me with an air of kindness, and a bland and easy cordiality, which contrasted with his ordinary blunt and brusque demeanour. Although it was evening, and the dinner-hour at hand, he still sat enveloped in his dressing-gown, his toilet somewhat negligent and unfinished; and when I advanced to meet him he hastily put away a large box of papers he had been busy in arranging.

In the course of a fortnight the personal appearance of Sir Bedford had undergone a notable change. His countenance not only exhibited marks of care and anxiety, but his eyes seemed oppressed with the fatigue of excessive mental labour, and his person was even diminished in bulk. But still the strength and vigour of that stalwart frame could be traced through the folds of the richly embroidered dressing-gown. Perhaps the loss of flesh served to exhibit the full development of the muscular power

with which he was endowed by nature. Yet, however worn he might have appeared, a glance at his eager eye convinced me that the anxieties which break the spirit of ordinary men would have but little effect upon his hard constitution. He had, nevertheless, suffered, during the fortnight of his retirement at De Maintenon, his due proportion of mental throes, which he seemed determined to brave as far as his usual stoicism would permit.

"You will excuse all this confusion, Marston," said he, as he pushed away the papers; "but the interminable accounts have made me forget the lateness of the hour, and your intended visit. I feel, as it were, a knot in my brain, from the effects of this labour since the morning; and I have no one to help me through with it," he added, in a tone of bitterness, as if the remembrance of the flight of De Castro, who was so useful an assistant, had just crossed him. "I shall be better after a little wine," continued Sir Bedford, with a deep-drawn sigh, which denoted the fatigue that weighed him down. "You must be sharp-set, I fancy, with your journey. We shall have dinner immediately. But I am quite *désordonné*, and must make a little alteration in my toilet; so pray excuse me for an instant."

We dined alone, and as the wine circulated, Sir Bedford's spirits seemed to mount, and his conversation became more cheerful. I could not help remarking, however, that he partook liberally of wine on that evening, and seemed disposed to press me to imitate his example. I was on my guard, however, and resolved to keep my brain cool for the proposed interview on the subject of my affairs. The conversation turned for a long time on the most trivial matters, and I was astonished to find Sir Bedford rather avoid all allusion to the subject on which I was most anxious to consult him.

"Now pray tell me," said he, with a significant glance, "how are affairs progressing at Hurstfield? I was sorry to disturb you, as you know; but I suppose you succeeded in making a fair excuse for your sudden departure. Sir Charles, I have heard, is very exacting in the matter of etiquette," he added, with his accustomed irony.

"Oh, far from it. He was kind enough to make no inquiries whatever."

"No inquiries? Indeed! And is he as indulgent to Fairfax as yourself?"

"Kind and indulgent to every one. Fairfax goes to Italy this autumn as an escort to the Misses Wyndham."

"What!" cried Sir Bedford aloud, in a tone of rage and excitement, rising from his seat and pacing rapidly through the room. "So he means to trifle with another heart, does he? Are his old acquaintances forgotten? Does he never mention the name of Mademoiselle de Montfort? Has he forgotten his music lessons—his visits to the opera—his gifts of rings and jewellery—his flattering conversation, and his still more flattering correspondence?" and Sir Bedford threw a sneer into each count of his indictment against the rash and imprudent Fairfax.

It was a subject which I was resolved, if possible, to avoid; and I said, boldly,—

In the concerns of my friend it is not my intention to meddle, and of all in this matter. Fairfax, I presume, is quite able to exculpate himself."

But you *have* interfered already," said Rushton, in a tone of angry estrance.

Interfered!" I rejoined, with studied coldness. "I am not aware of my having made such an admission to any one."

Oh, possibly not. It is only a conjecture on my part. You have just spoken sympathizingly of Mademoiselle de Montfort."

I have always admired her beauty, her accomplishments, her character. I may have regretted the unfortunate misunderstanding which has arisen."

Unfortunate misunderstanding!" exclaimed Sir Bedford, gazing in surprise, and waxing more angry. "Is this your interpretation of sincere attachment subsisting for eighteen months? Is this the defence of my friend?"

I must protest," said I, rising from the table, "against being mixed up in this affair. I have come down to De Maintenon on the matter of my own serious position, Sir Bedford, and I trust you will do me the courtesy to waive the discussion of a subject most painful to my feelings. I am sure that Fairfax is quite capable of exculpating himself."

I hope so," said Sir Bedford, drily. "But it seems to me there is no mode of exculpation that can possibly be satisfactory in such a case. I am the friend of Mademoiselle de Montfort, and I shall do justice done to her!"

I was at a loss for a moment how to receive this significant intimation, and with threatening gestures and flashing eyes. To seek to defend the conduct of Fairfax towards Louise was out of the question, because I could not do it quite as heartily as Sir Bedford; and yet not to stand by my friend because he had made a false step, appeared to me an act of cowardly desertion. I sought, therefore, to soothe down the excitement of Sir Bedford by a partial admission of Fairfax's error and imputation.

The whole history of this peculiar attachment, Sir Bedford, is, I think, a most interesting one to me."

It is an affair—a heartless action. Where can

be my theme, Sir Bedford, and so shall I in no way. Fairfax shall not be entered on by me in this matter. I am not willing to bring me a partner in this charge against my friend. I must immediately take my leave, and you will understand that I have been at the trouble of making this statement for no other purpose apparently than to be

Sir Bedford, from being remarkably pale, now grew suddenly somewhat doggedly resumed his seat, and with a wave of his hand motioned me to be seated. It was, perhaps, the first time I had ventured to show my full sense of my self-possession and indulgence in his presence. His *prestige* in my opinion was now utterly gone. I no longer estimated his judgment at an exaggerated value, but looked upon him only as a clever and over-sanguine adventurer, whose bold and ingenious schemes had failed to realize the expectations he had originally held out. Inasmuch as I had been a heavy sufferer also from the confidence I had reposed in him, I felt that the moral superiority was now on my side, and that Rush had yet to settle accounts with me.

"I have been too hasty," said Sir Bedford, passing his hand across his brow. "My feelings have made me forget myself. You are right in your remembrance. I shall do anything you desire. Let this painful matter, therefore, be buried in oblivion."

"Excuse my warmth, Sir Bedford. If I have spoken somewhat abruptly, remember my anxiety,—consider the fearful losses I have sustained."

"Your losses have been heavy, Marston," said Sir Bedford, with a look of sympathy; "but I protest I have been doing everything in my power for you from the first hour of our acquaintance. If Fortune has proved utterly faithless to you and to myself, don't suppose me so mad as to have invoked her aid in our common ruin. You talk sometimes as though I had a malicious pleasure in witnessing your embarrassment. You forget that I am quite as great a sufferer as yourself. But we must learn to bear and to surmount these difficulties as other men do. I have found a resource to extricate you."

"And what is that?" I eagerly inquired.

"You are holder of £300,000 bonds of the Argentine Company."

"But they are pronounced to be no better than waste paper."

"Ay, to-day; in the midst of one of the most fearful shocks to public credit which England has ever sustained. Who can say what their value may be three months hence? You are in at a low price. Hold them, I say, for three months."

"But how is that possible under the pressure of so many calls?"

"Every man of family has a friendly solicitor," said Sir Bedford, with much calmness of manner. "Yours will not refuse you a loan upon the deposit of the Argentine bonds. Perhaps Sir Charles Wyndham, your friend, would be induced—"

"I should sooner throw the whole pile of Argentine bonds into the flames," said I, with a feeling of horror at the suggestion of Sir Bedford, "than I should even venture to whisper to Sir Charles Wyndham that I hold such trash."

"Well, take your own course," said Rushton, shrugging his shoulders; "but you need not speak so despairingly. You are suspicious, like the

rest; and I suppose I am to come in for your contribution of ingratitude. At Hampton Severn they have been kind enough to circulate the report that I have ruined half a dozen of the good folks of that neighbourhood."

"I confess that such opinions have been expressed."

"Then I tell you they are false," cried Sir Bedford, vehemently. "Their own avidity ruined them, not I. I was invited, as you know, to establish a bank, and the fools mismanaged it. As well might they assert that I have ruined half the merchants of England, whom the late crisis has prostrated. Am I to be made accountable for a panic that has shaken half the world?"

"Oh, of course not; but where an undertaking has been a failure, and the promoter—"

"Ay; I know what you would say," cried Rushton, interrupting me. "Just as drowning men catch at straws, so when an individual is unfortunate, he seizes on the shallowest pretext to excuse his conduct in the eyes of the world. If they have sustained losses, let them remember their chances of gain."

"That consolation, I fear, comes too late. For myself I have a better philosophy, and that is, to dismiss from my mind all regrets, and endeavour to repair some of the damage. The expedient you suggest regarding a loan from my solicitor seems a good one. I feel assured that Mr. Jeremy, from the respect he has always entertained for our family, would refuse me nothing."

"Now you speak like a man of sense," said Sir Bedford, in an encouraging tone. "This is the first serious loss I have ever sustained. It is a heavy loss indeed; but, after all, it is only an affair of Leipzig, not of Waterloo."

The allusion to those fatal fields did not seem to me quite so consolatory as to Sir Bedford, who, as I have before observed, was frequently disposed to associate his actions with those of the great men of other times.

"My maxim, too," he continued, "is to make the best of circumstances. It is the rule which would have maintained Napoleon on the throne to this hour, if, after his first defeat, he had not been so exorbitant in his demands. Do you think I mean to give up the game? Never! I have laid my plans too well to commit myself—to put myself in the power of any one. For the present I mean to act upon the sensible proverb of '*Reculer pour mieux sauter*.' There is many a turn on the cards yet before I am to be wound up. I mean to die hard,—but not before my time comes;" and Sir Bedford, under his high excitement, began to pace the room with long strides, his eyes flashing, and the veins of his forehead knotted, as if he were gathering his strength to meet his pursuers.

"I am glad to see you so little cast down by misfortunes," said I, with a feeling of strange curiosity at this spirited speech of Sir Bedford.

"Misfortune, opposition, obstacles, the envy and the grudges of other men, give me a new life. I like to measure my resources against theirs. There is a real pleasure in baffling your enemies," said Sir Bedford, triumphantly.

"Well, I trust your hopes will be realized. With your talents and experience you may succeed in restoring your fortunes and credit; but for my part, I am resolved never to enter the lists again. From this hour renounce all speculation, and I shall proceed at once to wash my hands of all the transactions with which I have been lately mixed up."

"What! and consent to lose three-fourths of your fortune at a stroke? Such precipitation is folly and madness. It is the act of a boy."

"I care not what may be the loss, I am determined to clear out. I shall make any sacrifice."

"Impossible—quite impossible!" said Sir Bedford, with a calmness and energy that overpowered me. "You are bound hand and foot; realization in your case is utterly impossible."

"But I am resolved!" cried I, in a faltering tone, unable to conceal my nervous apprehension.

"Folly! Bah! You would escape!" exclaimed Sir Bedford, stretching out his arm, and displaying the strong muscles of his wrist as he closed his hand with a wrench. "You cannot take such a step. We are both in for it, I tell you, and must wait the issue."

The firmness and energy with which these last words were uttered produced a prostrating effect upon me, and I thought of the mysterious language of De Castro regarding the secret design of Rushton to keep possession of my person. I fancied for the moment that some unseen agency was at work—a sort of magnetic influence—which had made me a passive instrument in his hands. The spell was indeed broken as regarded my estimation of Rushton's character and judgment; but he still possessed an influence from which I could not shake myself free. I felt that De Castro's intimation was not founded on fancy or an ill-grounded suspicion. The interest which Sir Bedford had taken in my affairs could not be for nothing. It was obvious that he had some private end in view, which my penetration had not yet enabled me to discover. I now blamed my precipitation in dismissing De Castro without listening to the advice which he had voluntarily, and apparently from a sense of gratitude, offered to communicate.

Our conversation was prolonged to a late hour, and Sir Bedford suggested a host of expedients. But my confidence was now utterly gone; and though I assented to all he proposed, I was resolved that our intercourse should cease from that night.

As this resolve was passing through my mind, a loud ring came to the bell of the outer gate, which echoed through the house. Rushton started to his feet, and listened attentively for some moments. It was already past midnight, and an unusual hour for the arrival of a visitor. After a short

Pause a servant entered, and whispered a few words in the ear of Sir Bedford, who immediately left the room and closed the door firmly behind him.

A loud altercation now ensued in the passage without. The clear, firm voice of Rushton was overpowered by one of deeper tone, solemn and grave, like the voice of Gareb Rimmon, who, as I had not seen him since the beginning of the crisis, I concluded had gone to his marine villa at Tarifa. "Ah!" thought I, "here, then, lies the secret danger of which De Castro warned me. But I will know all; I will forestall these two plotters ere they succeed in entrapping me."

Rushton now entered, his face violently flushed, the veins of his forehead swollen as if with suppressed rage. He did not seek to explain the cause of his absence, or why Gareb Rimmon had paid him a visit at such an hour. He merely remarked, in a common-place way, that the hour was late, and I must certainly be fatigued; and according to his usual hospitable fashion, he conducted me to my apartment up the creaking staircase. He probably saw that I was moody and out of temper, and made no other remark on looking into my room to see if the fire burned briskly, except the customary warning to turn the key in my room door, if I wished to avoid the effects of the cold air which blew along the passages. He then bade me good night, passed on to his own chamber, and closed the door with a sound which echoed through the house.

I remained in deep and anxious reflection for some time after entering my bedroom. I felt the full danger of my position, and the old sense of compunction and self-reproach arose like a spectre before me.

I was in no frame of mind to think of retiring to rest, although it was past midnight,—particularly as I had latterly acquired the habit of sitting up unusually late. I therefore threw myself into the old arm-chair, and began to reflect on the course which I should pursue next day. It was vain to seek a remedy or consolation. The more I thought of the position in which I was placed, the more intricate appeared my involvements. The Marston estate was gone; I was largely in debt to my solicitor, and threatened with heavy calls in respect of the most worthless undertakings. My memory recalled a most painful incident of my life during the last twelve months. There was only one cheering passage, and on that I dared not reflect.

The fire soon became extinguished. I still continued to sit before the cheerless grate. The silence and darkness operated as a whet to the memory, and my thoughts were, by a sort of natural association, carried back to the night when, in that very room, a trifling incident had first conjured up in my mind an unfavourable estimate of Rushton's character. Was this man, then, only a *roué*—an adventurous speculator, who, without fortune himself, artfully made use of the resources of others to build up his own credit in the eyes of the world? Perhaps Louise de Montfort, too, was, after all, only a designing woman in his interest, practising upon Fairfax.

and myself; and the angry language of Rushton on that evening was only an expression of the disappointment of a baffled intriguer. Again the mysterious warning of De Castro flashed across my mind. It roused my curiosity to such intensity, and gave me the resolve to satisfy my doubts as to the character of Rushton, whatever risk I might incur. I decided, also, on posting down to Hurstfield and communicating with Fairfax that day.

As I thus proceeded to arrange my plans, a sense of weariness at last began to steal over me, and I rose with the intention of undressing and retiring to bed, when a slight noise at the farther end of the gallery that led to the sleeping apartments struck my ear. The gallery, being almost deserted and almost empty of furniture, gave back the slightest sound. The paintings which hung on the walls, and the brackets supporting the busts, caused but little diminution of the strange echo which rang through the house on any one passing over the boards. I listened attentively to a heavy though somewhat muffled footstep passing my door and slowly descending the staircase.

"This De Maintenon is a strange house," thought I. "Perhaps Sir Bedford is a sleep-walker!" and I counted the footsteps cautiously proceeding to the landing below. It was about two o'clock, and the hour was certainly unseasonable to be abroad. Presently the noise of the opening of a door caught my ear, and I distinctly heard a light step, evidently that of a female, descending the staircase. I concluded that it must be the very same foot I had heard pass my chamber just twelve months previously, though the hour on this occasion was somewhat later. There were two individuals concerned in a plot, as before; but now there were no sounds of altercation, no entreaties, no sobbing. Perfect silence succeeded; and I concluded that the night-walkers had again found their own apartments, and retired to rest. But a strange love of adventure and curiosity possessed me, even while I suspected that I had been invited down to De Maintenon on that occasion for some evil intent.

"Who," I asked myself, "could this midnight visitor be? The voice certainly sounded like that of Gareb Rimmon. Was the Jew, then, only the tool and instrument of Rushton, capable of performing, at his bidding, any dark deed? or was Rushton himself the slave of this mysterious foreigner, and perhaps bound to him hand and foot, body and soul? What interest had De Castro in telling me a falsehood? I could discover none. He entreated me to hear him further, and I would not. Perhaps he was actuated by a feeling of gratitude through my liberality, and desired to rescue me from danger—from the very designs, in short, of these two men. Why had I placed myself in their power, in a lonely spot where they might silence my lips for ever? Courage! A stout heart, a strong arm, and a sudden surprise may yet deliver me."

Cautiously I turned the handle of my door, and stepped forth into the corridor. It was pitch dark, but I easily groped my way down-stairs to the first landing. The old woodwork creaked under my weight, and, fear-

ing to be discovered, I paused for a few moments. My suspicions were confirmed. The household had not retired to rest, and a strange flickering light came from the doorway which led to the *sanctum*. It seemed to proceed from the blaze of burning logs, rather than from a lamp or candle. The chamber, therefore, was probably occupied; and, come what might, I was resolved that I would see by whom. A few paces further, and I found myself by the side of the door from whence the glow of light streamed forth.

It was only partially closed. I heard the crumpling of a pile of papers, and crackling sounds as if of some light substance burning. The passage in which I stood was in complete darkness, and therefore my person was screened from observation. I cautiously approached the partially opened door, and looked in. There, indeed, sat Sir Bedford in his richly embroidered dressing-gown, with a vast and confused pile of papers before him; while on a low seat in front of the fire sat—not Gareb Rimmon, whom I expected to encounter, but a richly dressed female, whose head was turned away from me. The lady seemed to be acting as an assistant, as she took from Rushton's hand from time to time a slip of paper, and threw it on the fire. Everything was done in silence, and a few significant signs only passed between them. The fire, stimulated by this supply of fuel, blazed brightly up the chimney, and threw a glare around the room, bringing out each object of furniture distinctly to my eye. The doors of the ebony cabinet stood open; the silver statuette was there in its place in the lower compartment; each line, even to the inscription on the base, appeared in bold relief; and the portrait of the fair and pensive lady, whose beauty had so impressed me, was uncovered, looking now, as I fancied, even more sad and interesting than before.

But who was the fair assistant sitting at Rushton's feet? Ah, doubtless the owner of the gloves; she who, twelve months ago, in plaintive and sobbing accents had exclaimed, "Oh! do not ask me to do it!" And so the mystery was about to be unriddled at last. Nor was I kept long in doubt; for the parties were too busily occupied in destroying the papers to think of an interruption. Besides, the fair secretary was excessively nervous. She did not seem very expert at her work, nor to relish the office; and in her haste or agitation she dropped one of the papers from her hand. In her eagerness to recover it from the floor, she rose from her seat, and for an instant presented her face to my view in profile. That single gleam sufficed to curdle the blood in my veins, and make me stagger back. "Good heavens!" I exclaimed, half aloud, as my eyes fell upon the careworn but still beautiful countenance of Louise de Montfort!

I crept back, stupefied with wonder and horror, to my chamber; and throwing myself despairingly on the bed, I smote my forehead, exclaiming, "Fool! fool! to be duped by such a man and his paramour!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

PILGRIMS ON THE WATERS.

THREE months have elapsed. In the interval the scene is changed. is one of peculiar beauty and repose. The soft breath of the evening ~~blows~~ ai blows through the long, bright hair of Fairfax, whose pale and attenuated ~~visage~~ visage contrasts strikingly with the dark and swarthy countenances of the natives around.

We are sailing along the western coast of Italy. The purple line of an extensive range of mountains capped with snow rises in the distance, and gradually grows fainter as we set away from the land, where a sparkling streak of foam marks the winding indentations of the shore.

Out towards sea, pale blue ridges of shapeless form raise their backs, as in the days of Virgil. They are the smaller islands of the Mediterranean. We might almost fancy ourselves wafted towards them, as it were, on the current of a mighty river, which seems to have taken charge of our destinies, and will bear us safely to some port, we care not whither.

Fairfax is somewhat abstracted, although he has the gentle Constance by his side. The colour of his cheek has visibly faded since his departure from England. The genial climate of the South has not brought the restorative influence anticipated. His frame is also thinner, and he exhibits those ominous marks of languor and weariness which I so frequently noticed during our earlier acquaintance; although they had partially disappeared during the first years of manhood, amid the excitements of fashionable dissipation or country sports.

But Constance appears to have already gained a new life from her brief sojourn on the Continent. She is now on the tiptoe of expectation, and speaks with curiosity and interest on every new object that meets her eye. Sir Charles, casting a look of fondness on his daughter, smiles at her girlish animation, eagerly consults his map, and, watching intently the blue line of coast, points out from time to time the leading features of the locality, and refers to Fairfax as umpire when his daughter ventures to question the accuracy of his knowledge. Sometimes, apparently with a view of teasing Constance, he folds up his map impatiently, and declares that he will strain his weary eyes no longer.

And where is she who should be first in my thoughts, although they be somewhat saddened by self-reproach and disappointment? The countenance of Adela Wyndham still wears the same steady, 'starlight smile; her voice echoes the same gentle tone of encouragement—perhaps it is even softer than before. Seated by the side of Sir Charles, she had been quietly noting all the prominent features of the coast, without giving way to the joyous feeling of enthusiasm which animates her sister—laughing at Constance as she claps her hands like a child at some passing novelty in

the scene—the skimming of a particoloured sea-bird through the shrouds, or that strangely winged galley which lingers under our lee, on board of which the sailors seem to be enacting a sort of pantomime on the deck. Sometimes she leans boldly over the bows to catch the spray of the wave, which breaks from the deepest cobalt into a shower of snowflakes, as our vessel sways under the canvas, and flies through the water.

“What a droll race of people!” said Constance, pointing to the boat near us; “they seem never to be at rest. Now what can they be about?”

“Much more usefully occupied than you have been to-day, I fancy. Don’t you see they are fishermen, probably from Nice or Genoa?” returned her father.

“Oh, I never could have guessed that. They are attired so differently from anything we see in England. I should so like to take a sketch, were it only for an instant.”

“The evening is closing in fast,” said Sir Charles, glancing towards the shore; “I fear we must wait till to-morrow, Constance.”

“And then the pretty galley will be gone for ever! Oh, how unkind of you to tease me!” said the restless girl, instinctively moving over towards Fairfax, who had not changed his position, but still gazed abstractedly towards the mountains in the distance.

“I am weary, Constance. The unusual influence of the climate affects my spirits.”

“No, Arthur; you are thinking of home. Is it not so?”

Fairfax blushed deeply at this remark, and Adela exchanged looks with her father. I knew well what was passing in the mind of my despondent friend at that moment, and hailed the deepening shades as a relief to his feelings and to my own.

The peculiar melancholy which hung upon the spirits of Fairfax since he left England had not escaped the notice of Sir Charles. His wasted form and pallid cheek might be explained by the altered condition of his health, but yet that did not account for the entire change. He forbore to utter any complaint. He was evidently making an effort to appear stronger than he was, and, for my own part, I became seriously alarmed. Fairfax latterly had been induced to avoid all exciting influences. He was indisposed to bodily effort, and breathed with difficulty upon the slightest exertion. When I last heard him make an attempt to join in a favourite duet with Constance, his own clear and flexible voice had become hollow and husky in tone, and gave forth sounds without expression or melody. The journey to Italy, however, had been most opportune. We had privately consulted a leading physician upon his case, who, without speaking in an absolutely desponding tone of the issue of his insidious malady, or without even undertaking to name the character of the disease, urged him to lose no time in availing himself of the natural remedies yet within his power, and trying the influence of a warmer climate and change of scene.

The secret causes which, during the course of the last two months, had

operated to undermine the constitution of Fairfax were known only to ~~him~~ and to myself. There were sources of excitement at work, which ~~he~~ resolved, under all circumstances, to keep from the knowledge of Sir Charles, who frequently expressed himself surprised at the increasing ~~attenuation~~ ^{anxiety} of my friend. From the hints he occasionally threw out, he seemed ~~to~~ ^{to} suspect that something must be wrong which we had not confided to ~~him~~ ^{him} Sir Charles hitherto had not made, however, any direct inquiries ~~of me~~ upon the subject, and I was resolved, in the event of his doing ~~so~~ ^{so}, to avoid, if possible, betraying the secrets of my friend to his disadvantage.

I must confess that the singular rapidity of the change in the *general* demeanour and outward appearance of Fairfax had given rise to *many* conflicting surmises on my part. Disposed to condemn Louise de Montfort as a worthless and designing woman, I even went so far as to fancy that the spirit of revenge had prompted her to resort to one of the foulest expedients to gratify her rage, and that possibly my friend might be suffering at that very moment from the effects of a poisonous potion, administered either by herself or by an accomplice. Fairfax, however, not only repudiated the idea, but affirmed that he had strictly avoided the society of Louise from the hour he had learnt the nature of my midnight discovery at De Maintenon Lodge.

But I then remembered that Fairfax had certainly tried his constitution severely in early life. Where such a course of excitement would have ended, apart from the mental agitation which latterly prostrated him, it was impossible to say. But the mischief was done, and repose for mind and body was the only hope now left. In his early years the stimulant of pleasure, acting upon a gay and thoughtless temperament, gave a delusive appearance of vigour to Fairfax. As long as the sunshine continued he was buoyant and happy to excess; but when the clouds darkened, and the feeling of self-reproach arose in his mind regarding his equivocal conduct towards Louise, a settled sadness weighed upon his spirits, and he gave way for hours to fits of gloom and abstraction, from which it was almost painful to rouse him. Not even the presence of Constance Wyndham—whom he seemed to love as much from her gentle, artless nature as from the influence of long association—could chase the phantom from his mind. It would rise before him, as if to accuse his past conduct; and in the midst of these gloomy thoughts and confessions of remorse there was ever a lingering feeling of pity for her whom he still called the injured Louise.

In the interval between the period when I had made my notable discovery at De Maintenon and our arrival in Italy, an important circumstance had occurred in regard to myself. I had at last ventured to declare the state of my heart to Miss Wyndham, and I became the accepted suitor of Adela, without a single obstacle on the ground of fortune being even hinted by Sir Charles. I had not ventured to whisper one word regarding *my heavy pecuniary obligations*, nor the character of *my relations with Sir*

Bedford Rushton. I closed my eyes firmly to all the consequences of exposure. My evil genius could alone reveal the nature of our compact, and I now rejoiced to think that I was separated from him by some hundred miles. Sir Charles, on consenting to our union, had suggested, as a preliminary, that owing to the delicate state of Fairfax's health, we should all make a journey to Italy together, and that on our return to England, after a few months' absence on the Continent, the nuptials of his two daughters should be celebrated, in the presence of their friends and kindred, on the same day, at Hurstfield. I gladly embraced the proposal, or, rather, did so with a show of gladness—the best I could put on, loaded him with thanks for his generosity, and became installed as the *major-domo* and purse-bearer of the party from the first day we set out on our travels.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A SUDDEN APPARITION.

As we came within sight of Venice, Fairfax complained, for the first time, of the humidity of the air. The day, indeed, had been remarkably hot for the time of year, and the evening had then set in. The confession, however, sounded in my ear somewhat ominously.

"I cannot help feeling," said he to me, when we were alone, "that Italy has less sunshine for me this time. But say nothing of that to Constance. Let the girls be happy, and enjoy these scenes; and, for myself, I have no doubt I shall be able to bear up until we get to Naples."

"Yes, I trust we shall have the advantage of complete repose there."

"Even already I am much relieved," said he, pressing his hand on his side, with a sense of fatigue; "and I am beginning to have even cheerful thoughts. Time, they say, brings about strange wonders, and I devoutly accept the proverb."

Sir Charles assured me that we could now afford to make but a flying visit to Venice.

"In a day or so we shall be again *en route*. But see! there must be something extraordinary going forward here this evening."

A crowd of people in fantastic costumes filled the Piazza of St. Mark, where we found ourselves, after stepping out of the gondola which had conveyed us from the mainland. The celebration of one of the saints' days popular in the calendar of the Venetians was evidently the cause of this unusual appearance. Constance was almost dumb with wonder and curiosity, and leant fondly on the arm of Fairfax, while I took upon myself the task of looking after the servants and baggage.

Immediately in front rose that grotesque pile, the Doge's palace, which a thousand artistical representations have failed to render trite or uninteresting. The cupolas of churches, columns surmounted by trophies,

diminutive bridges of elegant form, quaint groups of public buildings rising out of the waves, would have presented a novel appearance to the eye under any aspect, but now the waters around seemed alive with moving figures. The sound of the flashing oars mingled with the murmurs of the gondoliers, as they vied with each other to gain access to the landing-place.

In the Piazza, the increasing crowd swept past us in groups, yet without the least confusion or hindrance. Their movements seemed regulated like the procession in a masquerade. Some stood in circles, engaged in eager conversation, near the arcades; while others paced up and down the centre of the square in parties of five or six, laughing and gesticulating, with that infectious sense of enjoyment peculiar to an Italian holiday.

"Oh, how delightful to live in such a place!" said Constance, bewildered with the novelty and excitement around her.

"Is not Venice beautiful indeed?" said Fairfax, turning towards me, with a brightening look; "and I am so glad, for your sake, Constance, that you have seen St. Mark's for the first time on the occasion of a festival."

"But let us not lose time now," said Sir Charles, impatiently. "We can consult the good saints' calendar when we reach our resting-place, and get refreshed. Remember the tedious length of our journey to-day. Fairfax, I fear you are worn out?"

"No, Sir Charles," said Arthur, with animation; "believe me, I am much better."

"Well, for my part, I must declare for a little refreshment and repose," said Sir Charles, beckoning to the porters to move forward through the crowd.

"I hope the fête will last till midnight," said Arthur to me, in a whisper, "and then we can go forth and learn what is going on."

"But see! Sir Charles is impatient, and let us now proceed," I answered, leading the way onwards to our hotel, which was close at hand, with the windows overhanging the Grand Canal.

As the evening advanced, the crowd rather increased than diminished, soft sounds of music arose from a ring in the centre of the Piazza, and lights began to gleam from the balconies, and to flit to and fro. The city and the suburbs seemed to have poured forth their entire population; and those who were not already in the streets or on the waters now appeared at the windows. The moon had risen, and the Grand Canal and its tributaries shone as if covered with myriads of brilliant fireflies, as the gondolas bearing their gay freight shot rapidly to and fro.

"I fear this will be too giddy and exciting for you, my child," said Sir Charles, addressing Constance, as she stood on one of the balconies, with her head uncovered, watching with intense interest the motley scene below. "Remember the night air—"

"What, of Venice? Oh no; the night air is delicious here. To me all this is like an enchanted island. I could stand and gaze down here for ever. What sweet sounds, too, in the distance—so soft and muffled!"

"Ah, soft and bewitching indeed," said Fairfax. "It is the music of Pergolesi, played, I fancy, by one of the bands of the *amatori*—perhaps the company of *Gli giovani avvocati*."

"Happy Venetian lawyers," said Adela, laughing, "who can enjoy the leisure to enter into the spirit of such music."

"Happy land altogether," remarked Sir Charles, "if we may take the enjoyment of the young lawyers as a test of the general weal."

"We have been most fortunate, indeed," said I, "in arriving amidst all this movement. I had quite overlooked the idea of a fête occurring at such a time,—and I need not remind you that Venice is seen to most advantage by moonlight."

"Pretty enough to look at," said Sir Charles, "but this chill atmosphere is a treacherous sort of friend," said he, calling for his cloak, and throwing a shawl over the shoulders of Constance, who could not be persuaded to leave the balcony. Chairs were now procured, and Sir Charles took his place beside his daughters, and soon became himself almost as deeply interested in the scene below as Constance.

"Let us go out," said Fairfax to me, in a whisper. He appeared to be suddenly and strangely elated by the excitement around him. "I like to revive my early impressions of this fantastic city of the Doge. It puts new life into my veins, Aubrey, to gaze upon such a spirit-stirring scene."

"You wish it? Then draw your cloak closely around you, for, remember, you complained of the chill on landing. It is a slight precaution."

"I did, but feel it no longer. Let us steal away. Say nothing to Sir Charles or the girls."

We had some difficulty in forcing our way through the crowd as we passed out.

"Oh the gaiety, the bustle of all this!" cried Fairfax. "How it has transformed the deserted city! The people seem mad with this new liberty. How Constance, too, will enjoy it! and I hope, for her sake, that we may make a longer stay than Sir Charles proposed. Why hurry off to Naples? Besides, it is too early in the season to think of leaving Venice."

"If we are to visit the intervening spots of interest," said I, "it will absorb a considerable portion of our time."

"Well, Florence, Forni, Rome, and Frascati,—say a week at each place. But, of course, all that as the girls please. We must not cheat Adela or Constance of any of the enchantments we have experienced in Italy."

"Perhaps we might even take all these places better on our return," I ventured to suggest.

"Hark again to the music!" said Fairfax, pausing to listen. "It falls on me so soothingly."

"I wonder what fête it can be, to collect such a mass of people?"

"Many English faces in the crowd. One is always sure to meet them on such a spot."

"Yes, our countrymen are always partial to a crowd, either at home or abroad."

"And they are always so singularly out of place, too," said Fairfax, laughing, "pushing where they should not go—jostling you in church—staring up vacantly at pictures, and looking as if they had left none of their prejudices at home, and had not a spark of sympathy with the scene they came to enjoy."

"See, there is a brace of them coming for your censure," I observed, as two gaunt, bony figures stalked past us arm in arm, making their heavy-soled boots ring on the pavement, and staring into our very eyes.

"Manners, my countrymen!" whispered Fairfax, as they brushed by, freely giving way to a flow of spirits which I had not witnessed since our departure from England.

The throng with which we had mingled were mainly occupied with promenading up and down in regular file, keeping time to the measured bars of the music. The lamps hung out from the balconies seemed to struggle with the moonlight, and the features of the revellers in the Piazza could be as distinctly discerned as in the twilight of evening. We turned away from the more bustling quarter, and advanced towards the spot where the band was stationed, round which a large circle of the populace had assembled.

"I like the music much better at a distance," said my companion. "It sounds almost harsh and grating here. Perhaps it is the echo."

"Then let us return to the arcades, and join the promenaders."

We were just about to move away, when suddenly Fairfax grasped me convulsively by the arm, and exclaimed, in words that trembled on his lips, "Did you see that face—there? Is it not like——? Aubrey, do I dream, or is this reality?" and Arthur, as though he had seen an apparition, turned round and clung to me like a child.

I looked steadily for a moment into the crowd of moving figures before me, while Fairfax leant on my breast, and my eye caught the forms of two persons, apparently a citizen and his wife, slowly stealing away in an opposite direction.

"I see nothing, Arthur. What, in the name of Heaven, can have alarmed you?" cried I, gazing into the face of my companion, and observing his death-like pallor. But Fairfax gave no response, and still clung to me as though he still needed support.

"Are they gone?" he at length inquired, in a faint voice.

"Tell me what has produced this sudden faintness?" I again asked, alarmed at the state of my companion. "Let us return instantly. I told you I feared this excitement would be too much for you."

"Take me away," returned Fairfax, in a hoarse whisper, as if gasping for breath, while the tremor of his frame visibly increased. "Take me away, Aubrey. I have seen the face of Louise in the crowd; but oh, how changed!" and his countenance assumed the expression of a nervous horror akin to repulsion.

"This is nothing but mere fancy," I said, in a soothing voice. "Let us return. You are only dazzled by these strange sights and sounds;" and saying I proceeded to support him with difficulty out of the square.

When we reached our hotel Fairfax was completely exhausted, and I hurried him at once to his chamber to avoid meeting Sir Charles, who had been patiently waiting with Adela and Constance until we should rejoin them at supper. Some time elapsed before Fairfax had sufficiently recovered for me to leave him alone, and descend to apologize for my own absence, and account for the sudden illness of my friend.

RAILWAY TRAVELLING.

It was only a short run, but as pleasant a run as you might wish to have any day of the week. From Southampton to London, by the South-Western, is done in little over the two hours, and more safely than if you were going at a mail-coach pace. The providence of good management has watched beneficently over this line from its infancy; and, consequently, few have been the casualties with which its name is associated. Though possessed of a wholesome and just dread of some not-to-be-mentioned lines, of this I have none. Here the risk of high speed is reduced to a minimum, and as I roll, or rather fly, over its ribs of iron, I look out upon the swift landscape with as little fear or apprehension as if I were sitting at my own drawing-room window, gazing at the rich and busy scene which sweeps away westward behind the Harrow hills.

A pleasant run indeed! especially when the country is arrayed in its livery of summer green. Leaving the balmy air of the Southampton Water, and skirting what was once a portion of the New Forest, we plunge into the chalk—dear to geologists—of the Hampshire Downs. Deep in one of its gullies lies cloistered Winchester, royal and episcopal, whose stately cathedral, darkened with the pencil of age, hears the reverend rooks caw around its massy tower-head, as in the days when the monks of old paced in solemn thought or solemn pageantry its consecrated pavement, or fished for their Lenten repast in the fat meadows of Saint Cross. Chalk, and chalk, and still chalk, till Basingstoke is reached; but then, through the gaps and breaks which here and there occur in this milk-white chain of hills, are revealed the broad brook of the Itchen, and the green pasturages irrigated by that trout stream on whose ancient banks Briton, Roman, Dane, Saxon, and Norman have successively encamped. Further on, the desolatory work of the civil wars is visible in the palatial pile of broken, ivy-covered walls, and holly-growing mounds of stone and mortar,—historic rubbish which marks the spot where once stood Basing House, the castellated residence of the barons of Winchester; and in the shattered fragments of the Holy Ghost Chapel, beautiful, though dilapidated, within whose sacred precincts the stubble-pated soldiers of Cromwell piqueted or stalled their jaded horses. Basingstoke, the Holy Ghost Chapel, and the “Old House in Ruins” behind us, the road pushes on through an undulating region, half woodland, half meadow, fresh as colours new laid on canvas; then, as the train whirls onward,—twelve miles gained for every quarter of an hour,—the Surrey hills come sweeping down upon us. The Hog’s Back appears first in view, thrusting its rugged arched screen across the country, redolent of broom, and thyme, and other “wilding flowers;” whilst, at its foot, white-tented Aldershot rears an humbler front. As we near the Guildford Junction, fir-clad hills, sombre and deep-valleyed, gather in upon us, suggestive, amid their gloom,

of hare and partridge shooting—nor less, the winding, thrilling notes of the hunter's horn. These, however, again yield to the gravelly level of the once spacious Woking Common,—spacious no more, thanks to an overcrowding population, empty stomachs, Enclosure Acts, and scientific farming,—through which we speed on to the park-like, graceful scenery of the Thames, into whose fertile basin we have now fairly entered. Through such a broad field of beauty lies the South-Western line of railway.

Pleasant as it may be thus to plunge and steam over eighty miles of picturesque country, it has its drawbacks. Railway travelling *has* its drawbacks, which discount, with a heavy per-centage, the pleasure of thus flying with unclipped wings from town to town. The wear and tear of the human frame is prodigious; the muscular as well as the nervous system is kept incessantly on the strain; eye, ear, and brain are racked with the motion, the noise, and the whirl of this wild riding; everything is rapid, dazzling, and, in the extreme sense of the word, "fast." We live days in a few minutes. Country which our forefathers would have traversed deliberately and leisurely, scenes that they would have comfortably watched for hours, we pass through in as many seconds; phases of life and manners which they would gradually have alighted upon we lunge into almost instantaneously. From the heart of the metropolis to the most diversified points of the island, with its various tribes of inhabitants—from the Breton miner of Cornwall to the Danish coal-digger of Northumberland; from the Yorkshire wool-weaver and the Lancashire cotton-spinner to the Yarmouth fisherman and the Wiltshire peasant—is at a few hours' transition. With, as it were, the wave of the magician's wand, the aspect of the men and the country they live in is changed, and a fresh field of observation and surprise is renewed at every terminus for the amazed traveller, so that the mind and imagination are kept in perpetual activity,—an activity which engenders a restlessness, which, the more it is encouraged, the more dangerous it becomes.

"It would be no slight consolation to a drowning man," once observed a friend, "were he convinced by superhuman agency that he was born to be hanged;" and so with railway journeying. If a man could believe, with the faith of a martyr, that he were predestinated to be hanged, hanged, or shot, collisions and explosions, curves and embankments, battered carriages and torn-up rails, would be mere bagatelles for him. A sephistophile himself might drive the engine *à grande vitesse*, and discuss, with Machiavelli as stoker, knotty problems of politics and morals, the inspired traveller would ride free as the wind of all thought or care, regardless of impending crashes. "*Sauve qui peut*" would be a needless alarm, for, come what may, fate would not change the current of his destiny.

True; but suppose the boon extended no further than an immunity from sudden and total destruction,—what if the talisman could only rescue

from fatal catastrophe,—what if he were still liable to be bruised, and crushed, and maimed, and crippled for life, would he bless with any but an oblique-eyed gratitude the privilege of believing himself doomed to die the death of hanging, drowning, or shooting? Yet every one may safely place himself in the position of this happy dreamer—*minus* the unpleasant alternative of the rope, the water, or the bullet. The numbers who are actually killed on our railway lines are very few when compared with the millions who travel in the course of the year over our hundreds of miles of railway. The per-centage of instantaneous deaths is small indeed, even if placed by the side of fatal accidents in the good old coaching days,—when new horses were tried on Sundays, because fewer persons travelled on the sabbath. Although a terrible destruction seems lying in wait for the railway passenger at every turn of the line, as the “fire-horse” speeds, with his serpentine coil of carriages, through deep cuttings, and across high embankments—by the mountain-side, or along the sea-beach—over roaring torrents, or leaping, as it were, gigantic chasms,—the proportion of victims is marvellously small. Yet how helpless the creatures hurried on in this handicap with time and space!—how omnipotent this iron Moloch to crush them with the falling weight of his ponderous arms!

Subtracting the dangers arising from collisions, or trains precipitated over embankments—by-the-bye, the last seems to be one of the most favourite of their sports, when the locomotives are in a playful mood—subtracting the sudden deaths, the crushings and maimings, the broken limbs and broken hearts, there is still a further danger which threatens all alike, and which is not the less to be feared because it is invisible. It is an ascertained fact—and to this we have already alluded—that the soundest constitution may be more or less affected by being whirled and jolted along over fifty or sixty miles of country, whilst the minute-hand of the clock is making a solitary revolution. The even, gliding, oily motion of the carriage is a deception. True, we have not that rollicking, swinging-to-and-fro motion which distinguished the stage-coaches of other days; there is no swaying from side to side, as though the roof were overloaded, and the vehicle were topheavy, and likely to be overbalanced; there are no road-ruts, no rain-gutters, no stray stones, to jerk the carriages, and almost precipitate the passengers to the ground; still, railway travelling is not all “smooth sailing.”

“Why, sir,” said old Mrs. Wolfington to me the other day, “when I got up this morning I thought I had the rheumatics in my back, arms, and shoulders. Strange, too, for I am wonderful free from aches. I felt bruised, as though I had been beaten; but then there were no marks visible—no black and blue; and I was puzzled to account for it. All at once it struck me that it might be the railway, and so I asked Dr. Adams about it. I had only come from Southampton to London, yet I felt as if I had the rheumatics, or a regular good hiding.”

“And Dr. Adams?”

“He told me it were the rail, he hadn’t the least doubt.”

“I can confirm the doctor’s statement,” I replied. “I have experienced the same thing myself whenever I have had a long spell on the railway. Forty or fifty miles is enough to produce all the sensations you describe.”

The old lady had touched upon an evil which is indeed a serious one, and which affects, more or less, every one who travels. The cause is imperceptible, and escapes immediate attention, but the effect is not the less certain and painful.

Without setting down railway travelling as in itself essentially injurious to health, we regard some of the conditions as highly so. The very whirling motion is a kind of violence to our constitution. Sixty miles an hour is not the normal speed of man; his lungs are not formed with a view to such intense velocity, any more than they were made to sustain him six miles up in the clouds, or to let him live beneath the surface of the sea. (I beg Messrs. Coxwell and Glaisher’s pardon;—six miles of altitude may not be so intolerable after all.) There is a regular action of the pulse in a healthy person; and if that action be increased or diminished excessively, there is evident danger. It is not necessary to enter into the subtle question as to the limit of speed which is possible, or even safe. If a giant were to take us up by the leg, and whirl us round and round, as boys sportively whirl cockchafers attached by a crooked pin to a long cord, it does not follow that we should be killed outright by the velocity with which we move; and it is, moreover, a moot point whether a person falling from a high precipice, or throwing himself from a lofty tower or monument, dies in the descent from pure exhaustion of the air in his body, or from the concussion on terminating his meteor-like voyage.

But, granting the velocity with which we travel is not positively injurious *per se*, there is a variety of concomitant circumstances to enter on the debtor side of the account, and which we may arraign as so many liliputian agents in this work of mischief. Sydney Smith complained that, in travelling from Exeter to London in the stage-coach, he was subjected to no less than fifteen thousand jolts; and he naïvely asks whether such jolting could be good for a man with a stomach. The reverend wit’s calculating powers remind us of those of Thomas Aquinas, the angelic doctor, who proved from observation that fifty thousand angels could dance upon the point of a needle without jostling one another. Fifteen thousand jolts is a very excellent guess, and we accept the enumeration without cavil. It is this incessant jolting which “plays the deuce” with us; and whether five, fifteen, or fifty thousand jolts are experienced in the course of one journey, we still suffer. Old Mrs. Wolfington suffered from it, though unconscious of it at the time; and hundreds every day, who have come long distances, feel it the next morning, in the stiffness and soreness of their muscles, a soreness and stiffness for which they cannot account. Just consider for a moment the multiplicity of motions which accompany a

railway carriage, spinning along at forty or fifty miles an hour. There is a lateral motion, the oscillation of the wheels from rail to rail; there is the vertical motion, varying according to the weight and fulness of the carriage; then there is a diagonal motion, which is easily perceived if we watch our fellow-travellers, and notice the attitude they assume to preserve themselves against the impulse, or if we observe the direction which a loose object on the floor invariably takes. An eminent chemist declares that he counted ninety thousand motions in a first-class railway carriage from Manchester to London; how many more there were he did not reckon up. Now this is the point at which we are aiming. Reflect for a moment on the infinite concussions the frail body is thus subjected to. The prescription may be good for the medicine, "Before taken to be well shaken," but with the patient it is death. This shaking up of the human system is by no means agreeable or healthy; nor does the evil stop here. To balance one's self, to counteract, or at least to endeavour to counteract, the effect of the jolting and jerking, of the lateral, vertical, diagonal, and impelling motion, the muscles of the whole body are strained. Let us make no effort to keep our equilibrium, and we should be flopped to and fro, backwards and forwards, like a doll in a child's arms; and it is the violent effort we make to steady ourselves which produces that sensation of being bruised, or the rheumatics of which Mrs. Wolfington complained, and of which we all, without knowing the truth, have more or less at different times complained.



There is, again, another thoughtless agent of evil, which stabs the constitution, and is not perceived until it is too late. Sometimes it is ill-ventilation—at others it is too much ventilation. Whatever forms the mischievous sprite, he is not the less fatal. It stands to reason that if the air be not pure, and the temperature moderate, the results must be most prejudicial. Is the air pure? and is the temperature moderate? Answering this brace of queries in the negative, we do so in a qualified degree. It must be remembered that the construction and furnishing of a first, second, and third class carriage are not equally elaborate. The first-class carriage is softly padded, and lined with elegant cloth, rendering it not only comfortable, but, in some instances, even luxurious; the windows are carefully glazed, and the ventilation so arranged that there shall be comparatively little draught. These precautions are well thought of for those who can pay for them. *Non invideo miror magis*, considering it as a matter of life and death. Descending to the second class, we find that proper indifference to the convenience and health of the middle ranks of the travelling community which becomes the *Dé Saperi* of the Directorial Board. The seats are cushioned, the cushions are covered with American cloth, and a strip, a few inches wide, along the back is padded. There is economy in this. In case of collisions, or other serious accidents, less violent, and therefore compensatory, injuries are sustained; fewer spines snapped; fewer legs and arms broken. But in all the con-

ditions of comfort there is really no difference between a second and third class carriage. The doors are loosely hung, the windows are rattling and draughty, the flooring is hard and dusty, and from every corner the winds of heaven find free entry, and chase one another around the sides of the carriage, like a snowy north-wester through the mullioned windows of a ruined abbey in winter. In the solidity of construction, and in a few technical details known only to the builder, there may be a slight distinction in these secondary and tertiary strata of vehicles; but, as regards their respective comforts, to all outward appearance it is six of one and half a dozen of the other.

As to the purity of the air within, it very much depends upon the ventilation, and the crowded state of the vehicle, but not a little on the condition of the weather without—more especially the temperature of the wind. But the fact of impurity, of closeness, of a disease-generating atmosphere, is made painfully sensible to the olfactory nerve when any one enters a carriage at any intermediate station. If the weather be at all warm, and the compartment crowded, the oppression is intolerable, even if the windows are down. Fortunately for our personal comfort—unfortunately for our future health—the unpleasant sensations at first experienced wear off by degrees, and we remain unconscious of the atmosphere we are existing in, till some fresh traveller entering exclaims, with a wry face, and in a semi-stifled voice, “How hot!—how close!” Who has not felt this stifling heat, and cried out, with an eagerness only equalled by the Arab seeking water in the desert, “Oh for a draught of fresh air!” To what a degree is not his agony intensified, when some asthmatic passenger, or female suffering from the toothache, insists upon having the windows up! It would be cruelty to insist upon having them down; it is little less than torture to consent to their being closed.

In winter the discomfort and the danger are multiplied tenfold. Whether the windows be up or down, the peril is equal. We could almost fancy Holbein's demons dancing the “dance of death” outside. Borne with a rush through the bitter, biting, frosty air, which acquires proportionate force by the velocity of our motion; with cold feet, cold hands, cold face, cold all over, what ghastly spectral attendants accompany us on our journey! Throat, ears, lungs, teeth, one or all may be attacked by those unseen foes; and one or all of those mortal maladies—pleurisy, pneumonia, rheumatism, lumbago, sciatica—which the immortal Holloway (*requiescat in pace!*) professed to cure, may invade the peaceful inmates of the railway car. The shivering fit we feel, and which drives us with the faithfulness of instinct to wind our rug tighter across our knees, to draw the flaps of our cap close about our ears, and to embrace the warm woollen plaid as a trusty friend, is not a pleasant sensation, and may bear in its train more mischief than is dreamed of in the philosophy of any but those who have given heedful study to the important and personal question of health, and ill-health.

These are some of the drawbacks in railway travelling—and they are material drawbacks. If they could be abolished, if these defects could be remedied, if the creaking carriage could be guarded against draughts, if ventilation could make the air pure and sweet, if there were less oscillation, less vibration, less diagonal and vertical motion, if the only movement we felt was that of being whirled forward on our journey, how delightful it would be! And why should it not be? The wild currents of air that now rush like headlong sprites into the carriage, through window, doorway, by the sidework and flooring, might be kept in abeyance, or pressed into the service of better ventilation; and that untoward motion, if it could not be altogether prevented, might at all events be mitigated, by superior springs, and a more scientific adjustment of the wheels and rails. As it is, railway travelling is detrimental to the health, as those know to their cost who travel much. It is a glorious mode of progression, and great is the pity, then, that everything that tends to diminish its risk, whether immediate or future, is not adopted without delay. Unfortunately, in our railway systems and railway management we are behind the Continent. They order these things better in France; ay, and in Belgium and Germany; and we may safely take a leaf out of their books.

Still, the British lines have some good points, which we will not deny  and very pretty and very attractive scenery on either side of them  tempt us to travel.

THE RIVER.

A SANG THAT SEEKS A TUNE.

I.

It leuchs in the sunshine, it thinks i' the shadow,
 It sleeps i' the misty gowd air by the meadow,
 And on its green banks there are wild flowers in plenty,—
 Frae the pansies new-blawn, to the lassies o' twenty :
 Frae the pansie that hides frae the een o' the many,
 Tae the wee rosy-posy, my ain winsome Annie !

II.

It stops in its toil, like a wean sweet and happy,
 Tae stick yellow lilies and white in its cappie ;
 And it sees its ain beauty wi' modest affection,
 For the heart o' the gude is its ain sweet reflection ;
 And it croons to itsel', though unheard by the many,—
 And, in fac', it's the eemage o' my bonnie Annie !

III.

But like my ain Annie, the sweetest o' ony,
 It's usefu' and willing forbye being bonnie :
 It's wee azure arm turns the wheel for the miller,
 It ripens the wheat tae a handfu' o' siller,
 And ilk simmer it mak's, wi' a will crouse and cannie,
 A braw bonnie Bowrie for me and my Annie !

IV.

It tak's, when the day's dune, fu' snug and fu' cosy,
 The stars, like a wee flock o' lambs, to its bosie ;
 And down i' the moonlight, whaur lovers are meeting,
 If ye listen at nicht, ye can hear its heart beating !
 And the soun (like that ither far hid frae the many)
 Is just like the heart o' my ain sleeping Annie !

V.

Sae it croons, morn and nicht, though the deaf canna hear it,
 A faint under-sang to the deep human speerit ;
 And as Luve flees awa' to a far distant ocean,
 It sooms to the sea wi' a musical motion !
 And for this, an' for a' things—to lilt ye too many—
 It claims a sweet kindred wi' me and my Annie.

NEWTON NEVILLE.

USED UP.

IN all debates which involve an unpleasant personal issue, present company should always be excepted. When we, therefore, affirm man to be a selfish animal, one who only regards himself and his own immediate surroundings, justice and politeness alike constrain us to admit that there are exceptions. Every reader of this—for the time being—is, of course, an exception; the writer is another. Readers and author, let us exclude ourselves, then, from the cold shadow of any imputation which observations to follow may convey. Inasmuch, however, as some personal illustrations may be needed, inasmuch as a victim may be required to illustrate by vivisection the characteristics we wish to display, therefore, on the old principle of "*fat experimentum in Corp. V.*," we will take—well, say a publisher.

Were the case demonstrated to my publisher, beyond doubt or cavil, that in the year of grace two thousand and sixty-three—that is to say, exactly two hundred years from the present date—there would be no more paper, no more printers' ink, printers' type, worse still, no more authors, I am *nearly* certain the announcement would give him no sort of pain. Looking at futurity through the medium of his own personality, my publisher would take a rapid mental survey of the new conditions, and then ejaculate with Metternich, "*Le déluge après moi!*" If one single word of regretfulness should escape his lips, it would only have reference to the element of time as affecting his own personality. Feign the period of exhaustion for printing ink, type, and authors at a period as far removed again—four hundred years, that is to say—and my publisher would express no solicitude whatever. Let us now feign a speculative thought, one that, being of more general interest, is the better calculated for that reason to impress itself on the mind. Here we are, a population on these islands amounting on the aggregate to wellnigh thirty millions, increasing, too, at a rate that must scandalize greatly the spirit of Mr. Malthus. What if at the expiration of some finite period our descendants should have exhausted the last ton of native coals? "Burn foreign coals," the reply will be, perhaps. But assume the last remnant of foreign coal to have been in like manner exhausted? "It will be a long time," somebody whispers. Of course it will—some thirty-six thousand years, according to M. Carruel, a Prussian engineer, assuming the present rate of coal consumption to be maintained, *not exceeded*;—assuming all the known coal in all the known world to be made available. Now thirty-six thousand years is a space of time so enormous, that if a competent supply of coal could be guaranteed until then, even the unselfish philosopher, whose habits of mind prompt him to take heed of the wants and interests of far distant humanity, even he might feel almost inclined to shirk the issue, and exclaim, "What matters it?" Practically, however, the issue would seem to be far less remote. M. Carruel has indeed informed us that the entire remaining

quantity of unexhumed coals still existing in various parts of the known world would last, under the conditions specified, thirty-six thousand years, but he has not told us that we are even to expect that the whole can be extracted. As the depth of mines increases, so, proportionately, does the trouble of working them. We may dismiss from consideration the increased difficulties of water clearance,—that would be a mere matter of pumping,—but the consideration of rapidly increasing heat, as the miner delves lower down towards the great central furnace of our planet, is a matter that cannot be dismissed. A Turkish bath may be very bearable for a short time, to certain people enjoyable—enjoyable to loll about in, that is to say, but not to work in. The Monkwearmouth colliery has a depth of less than two thousand feet, yet the temperature of the workings is no less than 84° F. Those amongst us who remember that 84° F. is the extreme heat in the shade of a sultry autumnal day in England may perhaps agree with Sir William Armstrong, that the temperature is considered to be nearly as high as is consistent with the great bodily exertion necessary in the operation of mining. Considering, now, that at the depth of 4,000 feet the temperature would be almost 130° F., we may well admit with Sir William, that coal lying below that level may be put out of consideration—looked upon as for ever unavailable.

There is a certain order of mind to which the very idea of destruction is repellent, and to which perhaps the very highest idealization of the beauty and grandeur of Nature is suggested by the perpetuity, the eternity of her creative energy. Science, indeed, has demonstrated that so long as the forces which now affect matter remain unchanged (and they must remain unchanged if no miracle be interposed) there can be no true or elemental destruction. Between elemental and corporeal destruction there is an absolute distinction. Thus, a taper is burned: when, through that result, the taper—its corporeal state alone regarded—is destroyed, yet the elements which entered into its composition are somewhere; the chemist, had he so pleased, might have gathered them, weight for weight, combustion notwithstanding. The chemist, however, could not have united them into their original form, the taper; by which evidence do we perceive that, corporeally regarded, the combustion of a body is its destruction.

Approaching closer the illustrative case that suggested the title “Used up,” it is equally demonstrable that although man can readily decompose coal into elements, or rather new combinations of elements, nevertheless, with all his science, he cannot work backward. Out of the elements oxygen, carbon, hydrogen—and let us not, after the manner of some people, omit nitrogen—he cannot form even the smallest particle of coal. Far more hopefully would the chemist regard the chance of making a diamond. Touching diamonds, I am not prepared to assert they have *not* been made. If not made in time gone by, they may be made in time to come; thus believe chemists. On the other hand, no chemist believes that science will ever succeed in manufacturing one single ounce of coal.

If the question be asked, how coal was first produced, the reply is easy. Doubtless coal is nothing else than vegetable matter buried long ago, and which, remaining buried through countless ages, has undergone a peculiar decomposition. Of this there is no doubt, since, in many cases, the very forms of vegetable growth are still recognizable. On this point, however, I need state no more, it being one of the curiosities of science, popularized so long that any reference to it here may seem too elementary. The rudiment, if so deemed, is not without an object. Sketching a mind-picture of the process of coal formation, suppose we begin with the tree ferns and other vegetables, out of which coal has been produced. No; not even vegetables themselves are sufficiently remote for our purpose; we had better commence with the germ, or seed. Though coal seems to have been produced out of vegetable species, none of which exists now, the development process of *any* vegetable from seed* will suffice for our illustration. We take an acorn, then, and planting that acorn, it sprouts and becomes an oak. The acorn was a small object, one having only a few grains weight. An oak, however young, is a large object by comparison with an acorn. It has gained material from *some* source; the question is, *what* source?—what the material or materials? As regards the latter, the ultimate elements of vegetation are carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and sometimes nitrogen. Of these four, three may be expelled in gaseous or vaporous forms, by heat alone; whereas the fourth, carbon, is absolutely fixed and (under the influence of heat alone) indestructible. A block of wood being heated in a close vessel, until everything volatile is expelled, the carbon remains in the form of charcoal. Pause we now to consider the results. Charcoal is, indeed, specifically light; still a large oak tree will yield some tons of it. Our acorn only weighed a few grains; whence came the access of weight, the carbon, the charcoal? From the earth, a novice would most probably imagine. Well, not so to any great extent, at any rate:—according to Liebig, and most other chemists, not at all. The oak tree will have gained—collected in growing—its carbon, its charcoal, out of the air.

Perhaps it is hardly needful to admonish the reader not to confound the atmospheric carbon here adverted to with the fuliginous blacks so common in London,—so prejudicial to the whiteness of linen, and the pink and pearly tints of ladies' faces. Such form of carbon is wholly beyond the pale of vegetable appropriation. Not only is our oak tree unable to turn this form of carbon to account, but "smuts" have the effect on vegetables of a veritable poison. To be in a state fit for appropriation by plants, carbon must be actually dissolved, attenuated by combination with oxygen to the form of invisible gas. We cannot pause in our narrative to sum up all the sources of carbonic acid; but assuredly the breath of animals and the burning of fuel are sources so predominant, that were all animal life

* The word "seed" is used in its popular sense. An acorn, botanically considered, is a fruit containing a seed.

destroyed, and every fire on the earth put out, it is hard to believe that vegetables could indefinitely continue to grow. The connection here set forth between animal existence and the burning of fuel on the one hand, and the growth of vegetables on the other, appears very strange, as here stated; but it is real, nevertheless. Nothing, perhaps, could better illustrate the harmony and balance of nature, so frequently discoursed of, but for the most part so inadequately felt. Considering, now, that the amount of carbonic acid present in the atmosphere is only about one part in a thousand, and that of carbonic acid only three parts out of eleven are carbon, the total amount of the element available to growing vegetables may at first seem small. An obvious calculation, however, soon proves it to be enormous; a quantity so great, that if all the vegetable forms growing at one time were to be collected and reduced to charcoal, the carbon therein would sink into insignificance by comparison with the carbon dissolved in our atmosphere.

It is a remarkable fact that the amount of atmospheric carbonic acid is very nearly a constant quantity at all times and at all places. The balance of assimilation seems absolute; hence the curious speculation arises whether the ratio between carbonic acid and other constituents of the atmosphere was formerly the same as now. On this topic opinions are divided. Speaking of the vegetable species that now exist, positive testimony exists to the fact that they will not grow in an atmosphere charged more highly to any considerable extent with carbonic acid than our atmosphere as it is. Conditions might have been once otherwise. The vegetable species out of which coal has been formed might have been specially adapted to thrive in atmospheres highly charged with carbonic acid, and thus might have stored away the vast beds of mineral coal which still remain, or have been in a duration of time less enormous than could be accomplished by any existing vegetables.

Reverting once more to our imaginary acorn, let us again contemplate its growth. Various functions are involved in this growth, all of which, save one, we may ignore; this one, the decomposition of atmospheric carbonic acid, and the fixation of carbon. This is accomplished through the combined influence of solar heat and light, wherefore the sun may be said (and by something more than a figure of speech) to be the ultimate cause of carbon fixation; and pursuing the train of thought thus entered upon, it will hereafter be demonstrated that every fraction of a degree of heat locked up, so to speak, in the carbon of vegetables and pitcoal, was derived originally from the sun.

The expression "combustible matter" begets false ideas. Thus wood charcoal and pitcoal are, speaking popularly, combustible; whereas iron and lead are not. Nevertheless, both lead and iron, if minutely divided by chemical means, and then exposed to the air, will take fire of themselves. Whether, then, are wood charcoal and pitcoal more or less combustible than lead or iron? Many things are combustible, though not profitably

combustible, and hence not available as fuel. For a combustible to have a fuel value, it must be so constituted that the results of combustion shall be wholly or mostly gaseous. Pure charcoal burns to gas—nothing but gas; it leaves no ashes. Pitcoal certainly leaves ashes, but in volume so small by comparison with the fuel, that they may practically be disregarded. If lead or iron be burned, no gas whatever is developed; and as for the ashes or cinders left, they weigh considerably more than the fuel burnt. In this, then, do we perceive a bar to the application of iron and lead to fuel purposes, even if there did not exist other obstacles.

Carbon is the great fuel material of nature. Hydrogen has some value, but out of all comparison with carbon; to carbon, then, let us now return, for we have much more to state about it. Having fixed our carbon, or rather caused it to be fixed by vegetable organisms, and thus obtained a store of fuel, let us reflect on the uses, direct as well as indirect, to which that fuel may be applied; and here be the fact remembered, that whether our carbon be in the form of wood, or charcoal artificially obtained from wood, or, lastly, pitcoal, the result of woody decomposition, the argument is not affected. Our carbon may be used to produce warmth by the heat evolved in burning. It may be applied to the smelting of metals; and, what more concerns the particular illustration we have now in view, it may be applied to the generation of steam, to be used as a motive force. It needs no particular strain on the reasoning faculties to recognize the general truth of the proposition, that heat is a function of mechanical force, the conviction being brought home to us by thousands of common operations; but it has been reserved for philosophers of our own day to demonstrate the precise relative value of that function.

When an axle rotates it becomes hot, occasionally so very hot that the carriage burns. When the harpoon line runs over the gunwale of a whaling boat, the heat developed is so intense, that if water were not constantly effused the woodwork would soon take fire. When a wrought-iron shell, without a fuse, and powder-charged, is fired against an iron target, heat enough is developed to ignite the powder. These few examples will suggest hundreds of others; for, indeed, the general connection between exercise of mechanical force and heat developed is known to even the most unskilled in science. The reverse connection, viz., between heat and mechanical force, is not perhaps quite so obvious, but one, nevertheless, familiar enough when we begin to scrutinize. The production of steam, and its application in a steam engine, is one example; the propulsion of a ball from a gun by inflamed gunpowder is another. It is not the bare connection between heat and mechanical force, or *vice versa*, that needs comment and explanation, but the precision or equivalency of that connection. The idea of equivalency or correlation extends, in point of fact, far beyond the domains of mere heat and mere mechanical force; for, indeed, chemical attraction or affinity, magnetism, electricity, as well as mechanical force, and most probably gravitation, are all respectively inter-

changeable, in never-varying ratios; are all, in other words, respectively equivalent. If, for sake of illustration, a piece of zinc be dissolved in acid (such solution being of course a chemical action), an electric current will be set up. That electric current may be employed to develop a magnet, or the electric energy may be translated into its equivalent heat. Heat being once produced, we may raise steam with it, and the latter, when raised, may be employed as a mechanical force. Whatever experiments we perform by way of proving the existence of an equivalent or correlation, the result will be constantly affirmative.

Consideration of the statements just made will lead to an appreciation of the truth so often enunciated, but so rarely taken to heart, that man cannot create force; he can only evoke it. When the engineer burns fuel in a steam-engine furnace, and sends the developed steam into a cylinder underneath a piston, the latter is caused to ascend because of an elastic force applied. But force has not been created, only developed and turned to account. Vaporous elasticity is the proximate cause, and combusive energy the preceding link in the chain of sequence. As for the ultimate cause, who shall be bold enough to say what that may be? If we assert the ultimate cause to be solar heat and solar light, then we bar every speculation as to the source whence the great orb of day receives the equivalent of heat and light. Pause we now to contemplate a practical illustration of a certain mechanical or dynamical theory of solar heat that has been lately suggested.

We will assume that a wrought-iron plate, similar to the plates used for the protection of our modern war-ships, is set up as a target, and fired at with cannon-balls in quick succession. Under this treatment heat would be developed; and, assuming the battering to be sufficiently powerful and of sufficiently long duration, the heat might amount to redness, or even whiteness. In practice such a result would be impossible, but only because of the inadequacy of our means. The tendency, nevertheless, is recognizable, also the limit of that tendency. The illustration of a battered target plate clearly comprehended, let imagination now wing its way in one of the grandest flights of theoretical daring that has ever been essayed by the towering pinions of far-reaching fancy. We denizens of earth are aware that heavy metallic masses fall occasionally upon our planet. When newly fallen they are glowing hot, and a portion of their heat is necessarily transferred to the earth. If a sufficient number of them should impinge upon our planet, the heat developed might be sufficiently great to heat our planet to whiteness; and a result precisely similar might occur to the sun, if that great luminary could be continuously pelted by impinging meteors. It would be altogether beyond the province of this essay to set forth the data upon which the probability of that assumption is defended; enough to state that it finds numerous supporters.

Flights of theoretical fancy like this tire even the imagination of man, wayward though that imagination be,—immeasurable its excursions. Scanning

the awful immensity thus dimly suggested, the very spirit droops, tired, like the dove when going forth from the ark she found no dry spot to rest upon. Come we back to surer ground than coal-fields, and, regarding them from a utilitarian point of view, let us propose to ourselves a few practical questions. Firstly, in respect of these, inasmuch as coal is ever found in one geological formation, the question is suggested, how much coal is estimated to exist in the explored and surveyed part of the world? According to M. Carruel, the quantity of coal actually dug out up to the end of 1857 amounted to one hundred and twenty-five millions of tons, and at the present rate of consumption the coals remaining in various parts of the known world would last, as already stated, thirty-six thousand years. Further, according to the same authority, Great Britain yet holds coal enough to supply the whole world for the next four thousand years. Satisfactory though this estimate, on the face of it, may seem to be, further scrutiny reveals much cause for apprehension. The precise matter of solicitude is not the actual amount of coal remaining in any particular region, but the amount actually available. Relative to this, Mr. Sopwith first directed attention to the fact, that in almost every coal-bearing locality vast quantities exist which must be ever inaccessible. Sir William Armstrong, at the British Association, used the same reasoning, but he put the case more alarmingly. At the end of 1861, the quantity of coal raised in the United Kingdom had reached the enormous total of eighty-six millions of tons, and the average annual increase of the eight preceding years amounted to two and three-quarters millions of tons. Assuming this increase to be maintained, and that 4,000 feet is the greatest depth at which it will be ever possible to carry on mining operations; moreover, rejecting all seams of less than two feet thickness, the stock of available British coal would be exhausted in 212 years, and the available north country coal in less than 100 years.

In permitting the mind to reflect on the consequences of an absolute coal exhaustion, each of us will see no reason for personal anxiety. Open fireplaces and cozy firesides will not be abolished in our days. British steam-engines will go on, panting and puffing, their furnaces charged with British coals long after we have ceased to want them. The breath of locomotives will whistle, hiss, and snort when each of us lies mouldering. So to each of us personally the case matters little, but it is time we should think of posterity. Altogether, we probably use fifty times more coal than is theoretically required for obtaining present results. Investigations relative to the mechanical equivalent of heat have demonstrated the fact, that the mechanical energy resident in a pound of coal, and liberated by combustion, would be able to raise, if all utilized, a weight of ten million pounds one foot high; whereas one-tenth of that energy is only made available in practice with the best steam-engines. It is in smelting furnaces, however, and ordinary fireplaces that the proportionate waste of coal attains its maximum. When we consider that smoke is fuel wasted

and energy unapplied, some just idea of the loss which takes place may be suggested.

We can pronounce confidently respecting the mechanical effect that should result from the combustion of a given weight of any specific fuel, so soon as the degree of heat resulting from its combustion has been ascertained. Knowledge of the dynamical or mechanical equivalent of heat makes this deduction easy; inasmuch as it is now known that each degree of Fahrenheit's scale in one pound of water is equivalent to a weight of 772 lbs. lifted one foot high.

The discovery of the mechanical or dynamical theory of heat was one of extreme importance. Physicists were on the verge of effecting that discovery for at least two centuries, but until researches of recent date actual calculation of the dynamical heat equivalent had not been performed. In respect of the philosopher or philosophers to whom the merit should be attributed, here, as in the history of most other important discoveries, the current of induction had been long tending to one result; many had contributed to bring it about. We believe that in this case the finality of discovery will be referred by posterity to our own countryman, Professor Joule; though undoubtedly Mr. Grove, Q.C., in his book on the correlation of physical forces, indicated the existence of a dynamical equivalent of heat to be revealed sooner or later.

Sir William Armstrong's remarks enunciated no novelty, and in this consists, perhaps, the highest significance of them. Had the desolate picture of humanity without coal been sketched by Sir William Armstrong, and by him alone, there might have remained some lingering hope that he had made a mistake in calculation. No such pleasing solace as this can we lay to our hearts. The quantity of coal present in these isles all are agreed upon; the ratio of increasing coal expenditure must of course be a matter for speculation. That the present ratio of increase will be maintained there is little cause for doubt; nay, the probability is it will be exceeded; and if so, certain cadets of the present year may live to witness— if not a period of coal exhaustion, one, nevertheless, in which the price of coal may be considerably enhanced. Of this one fact we may all rest assured:—*Coal is no longer forming.* We are living on capital, not interest; a somewhat unpleasant fact to remember.

J. SCOFFERN, M.B.

SECRETS OF MY OFFICE

BY A BILL-BROKER.

PART X.—THE MEADOWS FAMILY.

THIS record of my discounting experience carries me back to a miserably cold, wet night in March, 1830. Business of moment unexpectedly called me to Wolverhampton, and, there being no inside seat vacant in the mail, I booked myself by the night coach, a very heavy drag indeed. As we were about to start, Mr. Meadows, junior, whose self and signature I was pretty well acquainted with, entered the coach, and took his place. Christopher Meadows was young in years—somewhere about thirty, and had succeeded to a very old-established dry-salting business about a twelvemonth previously. To a half-partnership, and the entire management of the concern, I should have said, as his father still lived, dwelt in the old place, and received, or was entitled to, a moiety of the profits. Meadows senior, who had not been seen out since the death of his second wife, lived in complete seclusion, the victim, it was said, of a profound melancholy. This was the more extraordinary, inasmuch as Mrs. Meadows was known to have been a woman of intemperate habits, and of a fierce, intractable temper. She came to a sad end. She had been out shopping in the morning, had bought fineries to a large amount, which were brought home late in the afternoon; and as the firm of whom they were purchased had been warned never to leave goods ordered by Mrs. Meadows without receiving a cheque for them then and there, the wife, who had been sotting herself to a greater extent than usual, immediately sought her husband, for the purpose of bullying him, according to her wont, out of the draft. Mr. Meadows was not in the counting-house, but a clerk said he was certainly not gone out, and might probably be in the weighing warehouse, at the back of the premises. Mrs. Meadows hastened there with unsteady steps, and without a light, though evening was falling, and the interior of the premises was dark even at mid-day. There was, it unfortunately chanced, no one at the moment in the weighing and packing room, two men who were working there having left about ten minutes previously, as they said, to have a drink at a near public-house. With the most culpable negligence, they had omitted to shut down a trap-door, through which they had been lowering goods into a cellar or vault. In the gloom of the place, especially to a person coming out of comparative light, the open trap would not easily be seen, especially not by a woman strange to the place, and in a state of partial—if partial—intoxication. Suddenly a piercing scream rang through the place. Mrs. Meadows must have walked directly to the opened trap, seen it when too late to save herself, toppled over, and fallen more than twenty feet. The unfortunate creature's head struck against the iron-bound edge of a large cask, and death must have been instantaneous. At

the inquest on the body, the only direct evidence given was by the clerk, who simply deposed that Mrs. Meadows, whose face was much flushed, and her steps unsteady, inquired for her husband, as before mentioned, and had no doubt gone in search of him.

Mr. Meadows, whom, notwithstanding the unamiability of his wife, the tragic occurrence had greatly shocked, said, in answer to the coroner, that he was at the time in another part of the premises. He heard the scream, but it was some time before he or any one else discovered whence it proceeded. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned, to which was appended a strong censure of the two men for going away and leaving the trap open. A few days after his wife's funeral, Mr. Meadows executed a deed, taking his son into partnership, and devolving upon him the entire control of the business. Since then the widower had not been seen, except by his own family and medical attendant.

The young man who took his seat with me in the night coach was Mr. Christopher Meadows, issue of the first marriage. The second wife had also a son by a former marriage—James Marlow, a person of about the same age as Christopher Meadows, but of infirm mind, though not so decidedly mad as to justify his being locked up in a lunatic asylum.

This weak-witted young fellow was inveigled into marriage, within a few weeks after his mother's death, by a bold hussy who had been for some time in the late Mrs. Meadows' personal service. Christopher Meadows, who found out what was in contemplation, ordered Jane Rigden to be off at once, with bag and baggage. The brazen wench defied him, and appealed to Meadows senior. To the son's utter astonishment, his father not only insisted that Rigden should not leave, but expressed his decided approbation of the match,—his reason being that the girl had been a great favourite of his wife. The marriage took place. The bride had formerly held the situation of barmaid, and, at her instance, Meadows senior supplied the necessary funds for taking a very respectable tavern—the sum required being, I understood, over two thousand pounds. The wife, though as fierce a shrew as her deceased mistress, holding her feeble-minded husband in abject subjection, was a woman of business, and the tavern trade thrived wonderfully. These particulars I had been informed of by different persons before I was fellow-traveller with Christopher Meadows in the Northern night coach.

A taciturn, sober-minded young man was Meadows junior. He spoke little upon casual matters, and when he did, his thoughts seemed far away, musing upon subjects—sad ones, I feared—which touched him more closely than the most striking events in the hurly-burly of the general world. Some remark relative to a wealthy Birmingham firm, by a fellow-passenger, roused him from his retrospective reverie, and he inquired, with an approach to vivacity, respecting the commercial status and responsibility of one of the members of that firm. Our fellow-passenger could give no positive opinion. He knew very little of Birming-

ham, but had heard that Mr. — was good for thirty or forty thousand pounds. I, as it happened, could speak with decision upon the subject. Mr. — was, I had no manner of doubt, good for a much larger sum than thirty or forty thousand pounds. Mr. Christopher Meadows then observed that had he been aware I was so well informed as to Mr. —'s circumstances, he should not have put himself to the trouble and inconvenience of a coach journey to Birmingham—his sole object in visiting that city being to ascertain for himself if Mr. — was really the wealthy man he was reputed to be. The subject then dropped. Mr. Christopher Meadows left the coach at Birmingham; I went on to Wolverhampton. A week afterwards I was again in Lombard Street.

There, one morning, called Mr. and Mrs. Marlow. The latter was a showy young virago, with a saucily good-looking face; and was dressed out in the extravagant beggar-on-horseback style which vulgar women, suddenly raised from poverty to comparative affluence, usually delight in. The wife explained the business which had brought her and her husband to my office. Would I discount the acceptances of Mr. Meadows senior—not the acceptances of the firm—for three thousand pounds? Mr. Meadows was an excellent friend of hers; an opportunity presented itself of obtaining a family hotel upon very advantageous terms; and he, Mr. Meadows, would assist her to the extent of the sum named. I said the sum was a large one, and though I had no doubt of the sufficiency of Meadows senior's private estate to cover the amount, we should prefer the acceptance of the firm of Meadows and Son. That, the woman said, could not be obtained. Indeed, Meadows senior was desirous that his son should know nothing of the transaction. Both Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Meadows had conceived an unreasonable but strong dislike of herself, and would leave no means untried to prevent the father from following out his generous intention to forward the interests of his stepson and herself. Mrs. Marlow added, that Mr. Meadows had been in negotiation with a gentleman in Birmingham for the sale of the half of the drysalting business which he had reserved to himself. The sale had not, however, come off, owing to the opposition of Christopher Meadows and his wife. Had it come off, Mr. Meadows would have given them cash, not bills. There was no doubt, however, that he would effect a sale before many weeks had passed.

I remarked that Mr. Meadows appeared to be a lavishly generous man, that I did not think there would be any objection to advance the required sum upon his personal security, but that I would talk the matter over with my partners, and let her know in two or three days. That, the woman said, would not do, as the sum required must be forthcoming in forty-eight hours, or the bargain would be lost. She must apply elsewhere. Ultimately it was determined that a final answer—yes or no—should be given on the morrow.

One of my partners knew intimately the medical gentleman who attended

Meadows senior; and though there was no reasonable doubt that his name for three thousand pounds was pretty nearly as safe as Exchequer bills to the same amount, it was essential to ascertain if he was competent, in a mental sense, to undertake such an obligation. The inquiry was, I need hardly say, made in a covert, roundabout way; and it was elicited that, though Meadows senior was unquestionably sane,—perfectly responsible for his actions,—he was oppressed by an uncontrollable feeling of dread—of terror—which he could not shake off for a moment. There was not a shred of silver lining to the black cloud which enveloped his feeble, fast-decaying life as with a pall. And with that dread, terror, gloom, was inseparably associated his stepson's wife, Mrs. James Marlow. No negro slave was ever more emphatically the "chattel" of his master than he was hers. It was distressing, humiliating to witness; and no one who saw them together could avoid entertaining with the conviction that she was in possession of some frightful secret, which gave her an unshakeable hold over Meadows senior. It was equally evident that he loathed, hated, detested the woman before whom he crouched and trembled. There were dark surmises, shadowy rumours afloat as to the source or the woman's power, but which, being merely surmises and rumours, ought not to be repeated. Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Meadows had not the slightest doubt that whenever, and as soon as, the father should succeed in selling his moiety of the business, the whole of the money—unutterably absurd as such a statement must appear,—would quickly pass to the stepson's wife!! The stepson, as they all knew, was a nonentity. My partner furthermore ascertained that the right hand of Meadows senior had become so crippled with gout, that he could not write his own name—could not hold a pen.

These particulars known, a note was despatched to Mrs. James Marlow, informing that crowing hen of the domestic dunghill that the three thousand pounds could only be advanced upon bills at certain dates,—“Accepted, Cornelius Meadows, for Meadows and Son.” Meadows senior, it was added, had precluded himself from accepting, or authorizing any other person to accept, bills for the firm. This was perfectly correct.

It was thought we should hear no more of the subject. We were mistaken. Four or five hours after our note must have been received, and just as the office was about to close for the day, a hack cab drove up, and Mrs. James Marlow immediately presented herself; her face, her eyes, inflamed—lit up as if with fever; whilst her hand, as she gave me the required bills, shook as with ague. I could interpret these signs without the help of my knowledge of Christopher Meadows' handwriting. I looked at the woman. Was it possible that, occupying an excellent position—one she could not a few months previously have dreamt of obtaining,—she had deliberately risked all by such a desperate forgery as that?—fitted a halter, without real temptation, round her own neck? Or might it be that, the money obtained, she was about to leave the

country with a paramour? Or had she such a hold upon the Meadows' as would certainly shield her from the dread penalty of the law; and secure in that, and fearing to lose the "hotel" bargain, she had determined to undergo a hazard which would surely be a very serious one?

It was bootless to speculate upon imaginary contingencies; so, assuming a business mask, I said,—

"The office, as you see, is about closing. Books, cheque books included, are locked up in iron safes. You must call to-morrow morning for the required cheque; at any time after ten. The bills are, I see, endorsed. Good afternoon, Mrs. Marlow."

I saw Mr. Christopher Meadows and his wife the same evening. The bills, as I had felt quite sure, were forgeries. The husband and wife were strangely agitated, furtively regarding each other now and again with looks of rising terror—almost of despair. Meadows senior was very ill, they said; much worse than he had ever been before; and the doctor had resolutely refused to permit Mrs. Marlow to see him, though she had called several times for that purpose, when her behaviour and language had been extremely violent. What did I propose to do?

"My course is perfectly plain. Commerce must be protected from such reckless criminals as this woman. To-morrow morning I shall go to her house with an officer, and cause her to be arrested on the capital charge of forging these bills, or, at all events, of uttering them, knowing they were forged."

"Not with an officer!" exclaimed Christopher Meadows, pallid with fear, and shaking in every limb. "Do not take an officer with you. There will be time enough for that if it be judged expedient to give the wretched woman into custody. A horrible dread oppresses me," he added, with a shudder, "but we shall now know the worst."

"Then I will merely insist that Mrs. Marlow and her husband—he is the endorsee of these bills—shall accompany me here; and I must witness, Mr. Meadows, all that takes place between any member of your family and these forgers. Such people must not be cast loose to prey upon society."

This was agreed to. I found Mrs. Marlow and her husband at a late breakfast. They both started, like guilty things as they were, at seeing me—the woman with by far the more nervous expression of conscious crime. Her restless eyes looked eagerly out at the door, no doubt to ascertain if an officer were lurking in the background.

"I have to request that you, Mrs. Marlow, and your husband will go with me to Meadows and Son's. An explanation respecting these bills is required."

"Oh, very well, Mr. Lovegold," said the woman, recovering with astonishing quickness her habitual audacity. "We have nothing to fear from Meadows and Son."

We went together in a cab, not a word being spoken on either side;

but I noticed that the woman's confidence had completely returned : her cold eyes glittered with defiance ; her firm-set mouth betokened unfaltering resolution.

Mr. Christopher Meadows was with his father, Mrs. Meadows told us. She would send for him to come and speak with us.

"That will not do, Mrs. Christopher Meadows," said Mrs. James Marlow. "I must and will see your husband in the hearing and in the presence of his father."

"That, audacious woman," rejoined Mrs. Meadows, "you shall not do. Mr. Meadows is extremely ill ; worse, much worse, than he has been at all. Your intrusion might be fatal to him."

"My not being permitted to see him might be. I *will* see your husband in his father's presence. Do not attempt to withstand me, Mrs. Christopher Meadows. Oh, you will? Hark ye, then, to a word in your ear."

Whatever that whispered word was, it struck the pale, trembling wife as with lightning. She staggered back, and but for the supporting wall would have fallen ; she stared with dilated eyes upon Mrs. James Marlow, who, without saying more, led the way to the apartment of Meadows senior. The father and son were alone, and we found that an attack of paralysis had deprived the old gentleman of articulate speech. The sight of Mrs. Marlow powerfully agitated him—I should say, convulsed him with terror, rage, abhorrence. He muttered and jabbered furiously. There was no doubt that he fully comprehended what was going on.

"I repeat to you, Mr. Lovegold," said the son, "that which I said yesterday. The acceptances offered to you for discount by this woman, purporting to be my acceptances, are forgeries."

Mrs. Marlow looked keenly at the elder Meadows.

"You hear and understand what your son says? Am I to be accused—publicly accused—of this crime? You know that conviction would be followed by a sentence of *death*—that I should be hanged almost as certainly as if I had committed murder."

The old gentleman writhed in his easy chair, and vainly strove to speak articulately, as great beads of perspiration stood out upon his brow.

I shall not detail the distressing, frightfully distressing scene which followed. The dreadful secret which gave Mrs. Marlow her fearful hold upon Meadows senior was this:—When the deceased Mrs. Meadows went to seek her husband, she found him in the weighing and packing room. The two men had just before gone. A brief but fierce parley ensued between the husband and wife. Mr. Meadows flatly refused the resumptuously demanded cheque. The drunken, rageful woman seized him by the collar ; a slight struggle ensued ; and Meadows, forgetful of his opened trap, pushed her violently back, and she fell through. Utterly ghast, bewildered by a catastrophe in which his intention had no part,

Mr. Meadows was still standing, gazing into the dark chasm, as it seemed to be—the woman's piercing scream still echoing through his brain—when Jane Rigden, who, for some reason, had followed her mistress, and witnessed all, came up, attacked the unintended murderer singly,—then perceiving the golden chance afforded her, pushed, pulled him away to a distant part of the premises, unperceived by any one. A strong dose of brandy re-strung his faculties; and he remembered that the girl-woman said, when leaving him, "Be silent, Mr. Meadows, and you are safe. Count upon me; you can securely."

The end, as far as concerned myself, was, that the forged acceptance were torn up. The end, as regarded Meadows senior, was not long delayed. He died raving mad within a week.

FIVE WEEKS IN A BALLOON

BY SIR LASCELLES WRAXALL, BART.

I must begin by stating that I cannot guarantee the authenticity of the following remarkable adventures. I merely repeat them here, confiding in the good faith of one M. Jules Berne.* The Frenchmen, who, it is notorious, are much better up in aëronautics than ourselves, modestly leave the merits of the five weeks' balloon trip across Africa to the English.

On January 15, 1862, then, so M. Berne tells us, but the weather is too hot to verify the fact, the following announcement appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* :—

"That enterprising traveller, Dr. Samuel Fergusson, has formed the resolution of undertaking a journey of discovery across Africa, from east to west, but in a balloon. The starting-point of the expedition will be the island of Zanzibar, on the east coast. The plan of the journey was yesterday officially approved by the Royal Geographical Society, which has made a grant of £250 towards it."

This announcement naturally produced a great excitement. It was at first supposed to be all humbug, but people gradually convinced themselves that the undertaking was seriously meant.

Who is Dr. Fergusson?

He is the son of a captain in the English navy, accustomed to the perils of sea voyages when quite a boy. At the age of nineteen he joined the Engineer corps of the Bengal Army, resigned his commission at the end of three years, and travelled through northern India, partly for amusement, partly to study botany. He then went to Australia, and in 1845 joined the expedition of Captain Sturt, which investigated the interior of New Holland. In 1853 he accompanied Captain Maclure in his voyage of arctic exploration. From 1855 to 1857 he traversed Thibet with the brothers Schlagintweit, and has published ethnographical notices of great interest about this journey.

We see, then, that he had had plenty of preparatory study for the bold enterprise on which he had resolved; still the public could not grow used to the idea of a balloon trip lasting several weeks; and it was not till Dr. Petermann, of Gotha, declared the journey quite feasible in his "Geographische Mittheilungen," published at Gotha, and Dr. Fergusson just the man to carry it, that considerable sums poured in from all sides to support the undertaking.

The arrangements were made in London, the balloon and car got ready, and all the requisite instruments purchased. The British Government supplied a transport. Several adventurous gentlemen proposed to join the expedition, but they were refused; and Fergusson requested a

* "Cinq Semaines en Ballon." Collection Hetzel.

friend, an excellent naturalist and most courageous man, a Scotchman, of the name of Dick Kennedy, to join him. This friend consented; and accompanied by a first-rate man-servant, who was not terrified by the impending danger, the two discoverers left England on February 21, and landed at Zanzibar on April 5th.

The English consul there, who had been previously advised of the intention, was expecting them, and aided them in every way. The car the balloon was filled with everything necessary (materials for gas-making, provisions, water, arms, powder, astronomical and physical apparatus, charts, and books), and they were preparing to make their ascent at a fine open spot, when an unexpected obstacle presented itself. The news had spread like wildfire among the black population, that some infidels had arrived, who intended to rise into the air. As the negroes adored the sun and moon, the aerial trip appeared to them an attack on these two deities. The hostile act against their religion aroused them, and they resolved to prevent the undertaking. They consequently assembled at the starting-ground, and declared that they would stop the ascent of the unbelieving dogs by force of arms. The consul offered a band of armed men; the commander of the English vessel, his marines; but Fergusson wished to avoid any tumult. "A single stone hurled at the balloon may delay our whole enterprise for months." The party, consequently, sailed across to one of the neighbouring uninhabited islands, repacked the car, and on the morning of the 18th bade adieu to the consul and ship's crew. The guns of the steamer saluted, the ropes by which the balloon was held were pulled in, and the "Victoria" (Fergusson had given this name to the balloon, in gratitude for the royal munificence) rose instantly to a height of 1,500 feet in the pure, slightly agitated atmosphere. At this elevation, which showed a fall of the barometer one inch ten lines, the wind was blowing from the north-east; the island of Zanzibar lay in the deepest silence directly under the travellers, the fields resembling flower-beds, the forests shrubberies, and the men insects. In two hours the "Victoria" reached the coast of the mainland. Fergusson resolved to draw closer to land. He reduced the flame which kept the hydrogen in the balloon in a state of expansion, and they sank to about 300 feet from the ground. They passed over a town which Fergusson recognized, by his chart, as Kaola, and the whole population was aroused. All flocked to a large square, yelling and howling through fear or anger. Stones were thrown at the aerial monster, and even several guns were fired, but the balloon rose slightly, and floated majestically over the heads of the impotent mob. The scenery was fine and fertile, and tobacco and maize were in splendid growth. At every village the scene of Kaola was repeated. The people assembled, howled, threw stones, and fired. About mid-day the country became well watered. They sailed over the unhealthy swamps in which the travellers Burton and Speke had been attacked a few years before by a violent fever, and Fergusson caused the balloon to ascend, in order to

escape the evil influences of the malaria. The wind still blew in the same direction, the marshes were followed by desolate plains, the villages became rarer, and the country rugged. It was beginning to grow dark, too. During the night the balloon was to be anchored (as it was a point to see the country over which they passed); Fergusson therefore selected an elevation, the fire was slackened, the balloon sank, the thrown-out grapnel caught a tree, and the day's journey was at an end. The man-servant went down a rope ladder to the ground, lit a splendid fire, and prepared a dainty supper. Then the beds were arranged in the car, and two slept while the third kept watch, turn and turn about.

In the morning fresh water and wood were taken in, the grapnel was weighed, the "Victoria" ascended, and the favourable east wind impelled it in the direction of the interior of Africa. The second day passed without any special incidents; and on the afternoon of the third the travellers found themselves over Kazeh, a town 350 geographical miles from Zanzibar. A few years previously Captains Burton and Speke had taken four and a half months in covering the same distance. Kazeh is one of the most important places in Central Africa, situated in a most fertile region—the Unyamwey. It has been for centuries the rendezvous of caravans. The travellers, therefore, resolved to draw as near to the town as they could. The "Victoria" floated over Kazeh, and was soon noticed by the inhabitants. Men, women, children, slaves, Arabs, and negroes gathered together. Fergusson cast anchor, and the "Victoria" was pulled up over a rather tall tree. The women and children approached this tree in solemn procession, and stretching out their hands toward heaven; while the men set up a fearful row with their hands and tambourines.

"That is their way of praying," said Fergusson; "they seem to take us for supernatural beings. If I am not mistaken, we shall play an important part here."

One of the men, dressed in a remarkable costume, who eventually proved to be a priest, advanced and waved his hand. A perfect silence ensued; and he began delivering a speech in a most solemn fashion, though in a language which Fergusson did not understand. The priest ceased speaking; and the mob held their hands up to him imploringly, and appeared to be expecting an answer. Fergusson saw that he must do something, and hence shouted down an Arabic greeting, in a loud and solemn voice. The priest at once answered him in Arabic; he saluted the strangers in apparently the deepest emotion; and then continued, "such a piece of good fortune had never before befallen this country. It was true that the goddess had frequently settled down on the top of that lofty hill,* but had never before shown herself so early in the day, while the sun was still high in the heavens. Never had she condescended to come so close to mortals; and never before had one of her three sons addressed them."

Fergusson at once comprehended that the "Victoria" was taken for

the moon. He accepted this dignity without hesitation ; and replied, in a condescendingly kind tone, "only once every thousand years did their mother descend in order to hear the wishes of mortals ; and this time she had selected the splendid city of Kazeh. If the inhabitants had a desire, they were to express it without any timidity."

The priest consulted with a few other men, and then replied, "they certainly had a desire ; their Sultan was ill, and they had to no purpose implored the favour of his recovery ; perhaps the Sons of the Moon could help him ?"

Fergusson, led by the priest, and accompanied by the elders, walked slowly to the royal palace, which was a considerable distance from the town. It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the sun was at its zenith,—it could offer no greater honour to the envoys of the moon. The Sultan's son came to meet the procession, and threw himself at Dr. Fergusson's feet. The Son of the Moon raised the son of the Sultan, with kindly gestures. Three miles further on, the procession arrived at a pass which displayed all the treasures of tropical vegetation ; a large, richly decorated house stood inside it, and there were numerous guards—powerfully built, handsome men—in the vicinity. Several court attendants received Dr. Fergusson at the gateway ; he walked through the harem, in which, however, he noticed no special signs of sorrow. Most of the women were laughing, and smoking long black pipes ; six of them set apart—selected, in the event of the Sultan's demise, to be buried alive with him ; so that the potentate might not want for amusement in his eternal solitude.

Fergusson reached the sick chamber. On a costly bed lay a man of about forty years of age ; utterly worn out,—probably through his mode of life,—unconscious, and motionless. A bottle of smelling-salts brought him slightly to his senses ; he made a movement, and, as he had been lying there apparently lifeless for several hours, the movement was regarded as a proof of restored life. A loud yell of delight from all present announced to the crowd waiting outside the successful result of the divine cure. Fergusson said, "Hail to thee ! thou shalt recover !" declined all manifestations of gratitude—it was six o'clock, and he was anxious to get back—and returned to the anchorage of the "Victoria" with the same escort.

"We have not a moment to lose," Fergusson shouted to his servant, Joe, who in the interval had collected the countrywomen round him, and had made their husbands jealous : "so soon as we are in the car, I'll cut the cable. We have a reserve grapnel."

Fergusson had a weighty reason for the greatest haste ; he noticed, namely, that a bright light was rising in the horizon, and he had scarce reached the car ere the moon appeared at the spot, bright and glorious. The crowd at once noticed the luminary, and saw that Fergusson had been playing them a trick. A frightful disturbance broke out ; several

arrows were aimed at the balloon, and stones flew close past it. The priest, however, commanded silence, rushed with several men up to the ladder, seized the grapnel rope, and tried to pull the "Victoria" down to the ground by main force; the other men, who could not reach the rope, caught hold of the priest's long gown, and pulled manfully at it. Fergusson had already seized the axe with which to cut the rope; at this moment the grapnel was loosened by the tugging of the priest and his followers, the balloon rose, the grapnel caught the priest between the legs, and raised him in a riding position; while the men held a portion of his outer garments in their hands. The priest uttered a horrible yell, but the Pegasus was inexorable; it would not let its rider go; and the crowd beneath were speechless with fury and terror when they saw one of their dignitaries borne away through the air.

"Hurrah!" Joe shouted; "that fellow holds tight."

"Well, a short drive will do him no harm," Kennedy said.

"Do you really mean to carry the nigger away to Europe?" asked Joe, whose compassion was at once aroused.

"Oh dear no!" Fergusson replied, with a laugh; "we will drop him again on the first favourable opportunity; and I believe that his being carried away to-day by the fiend (as it is sure to be considered that, something of the sort) will not injure his reputation with his countrymen."

They were soon out of sight of the town. Fergusson reduced the fire, the balloon fell, and when the car was about forty feet from the ground, the grapnel grazed a tree. The priest straightway comprehended the possibility of escape, seized the tree, slipped down it, and ran off hot foot in the direction of Kazeh.

I cannot follow in all their details the adventures of this modernunchausen. The "Victoria" passed over the sources of the Nile; and Fergusson confirmed the discovery of Andrea Debono, who travelled furthest up the Nile; and he also found the small island in the centre of the stream, on which Debono carved his name in letters a yard in length. In the third week they reached Lake Tchad and the Niger, passed over the Cameroons; and at the end of the fifth week they were on the Senegal, near the coast of West Africa and the French colonies. Here the balloon met with a tragical end. On the right bank of the Senegal there lives a very savage and bloodthirsty tribe, the Talibas. The balloon was obliged to be kept rather low, owing to storms in the higher regions; and the Talibas followed it, afoot and on horseback, and shot at it, though without inflicting any injury. On the evening of the thirty-fifth day they had already been three days in the country of the Talibas; the persecution appeared to relax; Fergusson, who had not anchored during the two preceding nights, resolved to venture it now, and the "Victoria" was brought up in a large wood that lay rather high. It was 4 a.m. when

the travellers were startled by a strange noise, that constantly drew nearer and was presently accompanied by a stifling smoke.

"The Talibas," said Fergusson, "have discovered our stopping-place and are resolved to burn or smoke us out. Let us be off at once."

But matters did not progress so rapidly; as they did not like to sacrifice the grapnel, they tried to liberate it, and did not succeed. This took up time; the hot air of the conflagration constantly came nearer, and the cable had to be cut. The "Victoria" rose, but did so slanting and irregularly; she had suffered some damage. The balloon had scarce got away from the forest and the fire, when loud yells burst forth beneath it; the Talibas had placed sentries in the direction in which the wind blew; and some thirty horsemen were the guard of honour of the "Victoria." Shots which were constantly fired at the balloon missed the mark, it is true, but Fergusson began to grow very anxious, and told his companions that they could no longer trust to the "Victoria." The wind, too, blew very favourably towards the coast, but still the balloon sank. The firing of the Talibas became more frequent; one bullet passed through the balloon, and it sank still lower; the Talibas came up with a loud hurrah, but Fergusson commanded, "Fire!" and the three foremost of the enemy fell from their horses.

"That will not help us much," said Fergusson; "we shall have to lighten the balloon at all risks."

"What shall I throw out?" Joe asked.

"The rest of our provisions—that is, about thirty pounds."

Joe at once obeyed. The car, which was almost touching the ground, rose; the pursuing Talibas broke out into a yell of fury, but continued their pursuit.

"Won't the bloodhounds soon give up the chase?" Kennedy asked.

"Hardly," Fergusson replied; "they think they are pretty certain of trapping us, and are not far wrong."

The "Victoria" again sank, and the gas poured out of several holes. The enemy hurried up at a gallop.

"Throw all the instruments and books, our remaining clothes, and the reserve anchor overboard!" Fergusson commanded.

Joe obeyed. The balloon rose, dragged along for about half a mile, and then sank again, in a flaccid state.

"Throw out the two double-barrelled guns!"

"Not until we have fired them off first," Joe said, despairingly. Four shots cracked, and four of the pursuers fell from their horses.

The "Victoria" rose and fell, and rose again directly that the car touched the ground. It seemed as if, like Antæus, it gained fresh strength by contact with the earth. In the mean while the enemy constantly drew nearer.

"Heaven is deserting us," said Kennedy; "we can no longer escape them; we are lost."

Joe said nothing, but looked at his master.

"No," the latter remarked; "we can still throw away one hundred and fifty pounds.

"How so?" Kennedy asked; and the idea occurred to him that Fergusson intended to sacrifice himself by leaping out.

"Very simply; by cutting away the car we can hold on by the cords for a few hours, and reach the left bank of the Senegal."

In a second each of the travellers had thrown away coat and boots, seized a rope, and cut it through beneath him. The car fell to the ground.

"Hurrah!" Joe shouted, while the "Victoria" rapidly rose three hundred feet.

The Talibas dashed up. The three companions bound the end of the three ropes together, each with his left hand, so that they had some sort of support. The wind was blowing rather strongly, and they reached a chain of hills. "The river! the river! we are on the Senegal!" Fergusson exclaimed. In truth, the Senegal lay at a distance of about half a mile in front of them. The opposite shore, low and fertile, offered them perfect security, and a favourable opportunity to land without grapnel or parachute.

"A quarter of an hour more, and we are saved," said Fergusson.

But the balloon did not hold out for this quarter of an hour. It sank slowly but certainly, and in the vicinity of the hostile shore it came to earth, on a treeless spot, where nothing grew but grass, a yard in height, dried by the tropical sun.

"It is all up with us," said Kennedy. Fergusson quickly led his comrades to the bank, all three holding the ropes tight, and dragging the balloon after them. The Senegal has a considerable drop here. There are several waterfalls in the neighbourhood, and the hope of swimming across the river at once disappeared.

"Farewell, my friend," said Kennedy.

"Don't despair, Dick," Fergusson replied; "I have not yet given up all hope."

The sight of the dry, withered, tall grass had aroused an idea in Fergusson's mind.

"We have at least an hour before us ere the bandits discover and catch us up. Let us collect as much of this grass as we can directly. I want at least one hundred pounds."

"What for?" Kennedy asked, who did not yet comprehend.

"The gas has poured out of the balloon; let us try to cross the river by means of hot air."

Kennedy and Joe set to work with the utmost speed. Fergusson examined the balloon. The largest orifice was in its lowest part, and this was cut away; the other holes, further up, were stopped by knotting the stuff. The collected grass was then fired.

It takes but little time to fill a balloon with hot air. One hundred degrees Fahrenheit suffice to deprive the air of one-half its specific gravity. The balloon expanded. Fergusson kept up the fire, his two companions plucked fresh grass, and the "Victoria" soon reassumed her haughty, crinolinish appearance.

Three quarters of an hour had slipped away. At this moment the Talibas appeared, about half a mile to the north of the "Victoria." Their yells and the gallop of their horses could be distinctly heard.

"They will be here in ten minutes," said Kennedy.

"We must be off in five," Fergusson replied. The balloon was two-thirds filled.

"To the ropes!" Fergusson commanded. The balloon tried to rise. "Hold it down with all your might!" was the next order.

The Talibas had arrived within five hundred yards of them. Their bullets dashed up the sand in front of the friends.

"Let us be off!" Fergusson shouted.

The travellers stamped on the ground with all their strength; the balloon rose, and was greeted by a salvo from the Talibas. Joe felt a sharp pain in his left shoulder, but did not utter a cry. A gentle breeze impelled the balloon to the centre of the river. Here it sank a little. The bullets of the foe struck the water beneath them; but the wind rose again, and carried it further; but at the expiration of ten minutes the "Victoria" slowly settled down in the vicinity of the left bank.

On this bank were standing a dozen men in naval uniform, affected by this inexplicable scene which was going on before their eyes. Among them was a naval officer who had read about Dr. Fergusson's undertaking in the European papers.

The "Victoria" had sunk on the surface of the river about fifteen feet from the bank. The Frenchman leaped into the water, and swam off to the imperilled men.

"Dr. Fergusson?" the officer asked.

"Himself," the other replied, "with his two friends."

They reached the bank. Fergusson held the cord of the balloon, but as he leaped out of the water he opened his hand slightly, a puff of wind caught the balloon, and away it rolled.

"Poor 'Victoria'!" Joe sighed.

Fergusson could not refrain from tears; he opened his arms, and his two companions with the deepest emotion fell on his bosom.

The French soldiers belonged to a small expedition, which had been sent to find a proper place for a station; they were naturally willing, at Fergusson's request, to testify to what they had seen, and thus originated the following document:—

"We, whose signatures are appended, declare that on this day we saw Dr. Fergusson, Richard Kennedy, and Joseph Wilson arrive, hanging on the end of a balloon. At the last moment the balloon was caught by a puff of wind, and sank

in the Senegal. In confirmation of this, we have drawn up and signed this document.

"DUFRAISSE, Capt. Marine Infantry.

"RODONNEL, Enseigne de Vaisseau.

"DUFAYS, Sergeant, &c."

With this small party the travellers reached, on May 27th, the outpost of Medina, situated on the Senegal, but somewhat further north. They were most hospitably treated by the officers there, were enabled the next day to go aboard a steamer bound for St. Louis, and arrived in London on June 26. Joe's wound was of no consequence, and had long been healed.

Fergusson gave an account of his journeys and discoveries in a public meeting of the Geographical Society of London, and received for himself and his two companions the gold medal which was granted for the most important voyage of discovery in 1862. All I can say is, that it was shameful of our newspapers, which profess to record everything that passes, to treat this important event with such utter silence.

OUR PILOT.

"MR. HASTINGS, the House wants you, please. I was to beg you to step directly into the parlour, Mr. Graysbrook said."

The speaker was young Hackett, the junior, newly promoted to a stool in the counting-house of Graysbrook and Freek, of Bucklersbury, and I was their second clerk. We always called our principal, old Mr. Graysbrook, "the House," in old-fashioned style. Ours was an old-fashioned firm, though most of the clerks, myself included, happened to be young men. There had been a great deal of retiring and pensioning off of grey-headed veterans of the desk about the time of my entry into the employment of Graysbrook and Freek; and thus it had come about that, except Mr. Salt, the octogenarian cashier, who had served three generations, the seniors of the office were Loring and myself. Loring, the head clerk, was away, and I had to transact his business as well as my own, and was deep in correspondence; but I rose from my seat immediately on receiving the summons, and proceeded to the dark little parlour, with its dim windows and blackened mahogany furniture, where our chief awaited me.

Mr. Graysbrook—there was no Freek, and had been none for thirty years, but the firm was tenacious about retaining its ancient name—was a fine specimen of the British merchant, florid, white-haired, and of a goodly presence, besides being an excellent man of business. A little formal, perhaps, and a stickler for antique usages—he had been, with great trouble, coaxed by his relatives into giving up his blue coat with the gilt buttons, but still adhered to drab continuations and a bunch of seals—but a worthy man in every sense of the word. Graysbrook and Freek had fallen a little behind the age, perhaps, and were good-humouredly bantered as a fossil firm by more rapid and dashing competitors; but their signature was respected, and their opinion valued, in the City still. I have little more to say of Mr. Graysbrook, but that he was a bachelor in his seventy-second year, and that the honours of his pretty villa, Tiger-lily Lodge, Stamford Hill—so named by some former occupier of floricultural tastes—were pleasantly done by his two pretty nieces, Kate and Jane Graysbrook, the orphan daughters of a Devonshire clergyman.

I had never seen our principal—generally a calm, rather proud man, who was kind to his dependants without forgetting his authority—so agitated as I now found him, pacing the room with quick, impatient strides, and muttering broken sentences to himself, as he knit his bushy eyebrows into a heavy frown. He scarcely acknowledged my "Good morning," though I had always been one of his favourites, and had been a welcome guest at Tiger-lily Lodge on many a pleasant summer afternoon. For some moments I awaited his pleasure, and was then about to speak, when Mr. Graysbrook suddenly stopped in his walk, looked me full in the face, and exclaimed,—

"Hastings—Henry, my boy, I am going to put great trust in you; I always liked you, lad, and I am sure you will do your best to help. I wish I had spoken before. Oh, Hastings, that black-hearted villain, ring, has ruined me; yes, ruined me! As sure as the sun's in heaven, the 26th of next month Graysbrook and Freek must suspend payment."

Then the truth came out. Loring's absence, which had been a mystery to all of us, was brought about by his being entrusted with an important mission by our principal, who had a very high opinion of the old clerk's abilities. Loring had, in fact, some showy qualities, and a remarkable power of ingratiating himself with those whom he desired to please; and Mr. Graysbrook had thought fit to employ him in what is technically called an "operation," which operation was briefly as follows. The head clerk had been instructed to make the best of his way to South Carolina, where, on certain plantations on the Ashley River, some thousands of cotton were lying ready for delivery. These bales, doubly precious since the Federal blockade had sealed up the coast against open traffic, had been the property of a well-known factor, a certain Jonadab Bates, who had acquired the estates on which the staple was grown, paying the purchase-money by the aid of his British correspondent, Mr. Graysbrook. To guarantee these advances, Mr. Bates had pledged a portion of the crop. He was now dead, and his affairs in no small confusion, but his executors were willing to yield up the whole store of cotton to the English creditor, in consideration of a further payment in hard cash.

"And that was why I sent Loring," said the merchant. "The sum was a heavy one, and it was to be paid in gold, by express stipulation, and commanding a very high premium in the South, as you are aware. But the cotton is of fair quality, and the quantity so considerable that, posing that, by dividing the freight, and shipping it in different vessels, we got only one-half safely through the blockade, a great gain would result at present prices. By waiting, on the other hand, I risked the loss of the whole of my advances, as the cotton would be burned in case of a general invasion. Loring had been in America; you know how glibly he used to talk of Yankee manners and customs; and therefore I sent the vessel—though Heaven forgive me if I do him an injustice, since, perhaps, the poor fellow has been drowned, or made away with in the present distressed state of the country."

Mr. Graysbrook went on to say that bills for a considerable amount would fall due on the 26th of the following month; bills which must be honoured in case of the non-recovery of the sum which Loring had carried away with him, or of the much larger sum that had been confidently anticipated as soon as a portion of the cotton should reach Liverpool. The principal had looked out with trustfulness for a letter from his secretary, and, not receiving one, had written twice, by way of Bahama, without effect. And on the arrival of the West Indian mail that

morning, without any sign of the long overdue letter, the merchant's waning faith in his clerk had wholly departed. Whether Loring's silence were due to misfortune or treachery, it was obvious that there was little chance of its being broken. And therefore on the 26th, that fatal date, a commercial sword of Damocles would descend to cut short the existence of the long-respected firm of Graysbrook and Freek.

"And now the question is, Henry Hastings, will *you* go to South Carolina?"

"I, sir?" I was no great traveller, a trip to Paris, with an excursion ticket, having been my longest pilgrimage; and the proposition rather startled me.

"Yes, young man," said the old merchant, firmly. "If I could shake off some twenty years, I'd ask no one to do the errand for me; but as it is, I must stop at home. Will you go, proceeding to Bahama by the packet that sails the day after to-morrow, and watching for a good chance of eluding the blockading fleet? You know Loring, and can identify him in case of need. You shall have full credentials in writing, and if you succeed I'll give you a thousand pounds. Is it a bargain?"

I replied at once, accepting the duty, but declining to receive the pecuniary recompence which my employer's liberality had suggested. There was but one reward, I ventured to add, rather awkwardly, which I could bring myself to ask at the merchant's hands, and that—

"And that is, of course, a partnership," said the old gentleman, testily, beating on the table with his seal ring. "You youngsters of nowadays expect to be masters at an age at which we old-fashioned cits were sweeping floors and sleeping under the counter. Partner in such a house as ours at nine-and-twenty! If you were six or seven years older I might think of it, but at nine-and-twenty—"

I took the liberty of interrupting the merchant, by assuring him that my views were, in a commercial point of view, less presumptuous than he supposed. All I asked was permission to pay my addresses to his pretty, portionless, younger niece, Miss Jane. I had known and admired her for above a year, I said, and I did not think she considered me as an absolutely hateful or indifferent object, though I should have held it dishonourable to make her an offer of marriage without her guardian's consent. I reminded Mr. Graysbrook that I had some private means, in addition to the very liberal salary I received from him, so that I could well afford to marry; and, indeed, when the old man had recovered his first surprise, he made but few and faint objections to my becoming a suitor for his niece. Thus, when I started for Southampton to catch the mail packet, it had been settled between my employer and myself—and pretty Jane Graysbrook, smiling through her tears, had confirmed the contract—that I might regard the merchant's niece as my future wife, should I save the fortunes of the tottering house of Graysbrook and Freek.

My outward voyage to Nassau was unadventurous enough. The

weather was fine, the sea smooth, and the winds light and favourable; while there was a charm in the first rich glimpse of the tropics which could have made up for more than the petty discomforts inseparable from trip in even the best of steamships. Once arrived at Nassau, however, began to realize the difficulties of my position. The little place presented an aspect of strange liveliness and bustle, such as before the war it had never shown. The harbour was crammed with craft of all sorts and sizes; the bay was full of shipping; the little streets were crowded, and there was a continual stir and turmoil on the quay, all too small for the mass of traffic that daily poured in. All this animation, all this activity, had been caused by the Federal blockade of the Southern coast; and the cheerful faces of the burghers attested the fact that Nassau was the greatemporium for contraband of war and smuggled cotton, and that much money was being spent in the island by those employed in this gainful at perilous commerce. Wherever I went, in tavern, grocery, store, or hunting-house, there was but one all-engrossing topic, one common subject of interest,—the blockade. Such and such a schooner had been taken; such a brig had been burned, cargo and all, to keep her out of Yankee hands; such a drogher had come in with cotton; such a steamer had got off to Charleston, with so many thousand stand of arms on board. The *lack-eyed Susan* had been sunk by the U.S. gunboat *Sloper*,—no, she had only received four round shot in her hull, and had escaped among the sandys. Who had insured the *Delight*? They would lose smartly, for the vessel had been condemned; whereas the *Fly by Night* had got into Charleston securely, and her freight of Blakely guns was worth twenty-three thousand dollars, net profit.

All this gambling and venturing, this staking of fortunes on the speed of a vessel or the wariness of a captain, was thrillingly exciting to the smokers, merchants, and other speculators, who swarmed in the Nassau boarding-houses, and who had only a pecuniary interest in the game. But with me matters stood otherwise; for my hopes, and the stability of our firm, depended upon my making a safe and speedy run to and from the shores of South Carolina; and the capture, which to others was a mere vexation, would be ruin to me. And I perceived that the risks early balanced the favourable chances; that if many escaped, many were taken; and the loss of a ship was philosophically borne by her owners.

Glad was I, therefore, when Captain Pritchard, of the *Bonnybell*, fast-going, Clyde built, iron steamer, that had for many days lain idle in the bay, accosted me in the following terms:—

“Good morning, Mr. Hastings! On the island yet, I see. Ah! you can’t do better than take a passage with us. We slip cable to-night, between ourselves and the post.”

These last words were spoken in a very low tone, and with a cautious, weeping glance that took in every object,—the harbours made of old boats, half hidden in roses; the little gardens, the patches of yam and sweet

potato; the tiny wooden houses, gay with staring paint—white, green, or scarlet, according to the fancy of the proprietor; and the bushy hedges of geranium and aloe shrub.

“To-night!”

The words were wondrous tempting, for I had been already five days at Nassau, and time was running on cruelly fast towards that dreadful 26th proximo, when the protested bills of the honoured old house should be the subject of City men’s discourse, and the shutters should be put up, and the melancholy pilgrimage of Portugal Street begin. I had more than once turned a longing eye to the swift Clyde built boat, lying anchored in the bay, like a sleeping sword-fish, with the British flag drooping lazily from her gaff, and a grisly Yankee gunboat watching her from afar off. And now she was going to sail. It was tempting, very tempting. Captain Pritchard saw my hesitation, and spoke again.

“Look here, Hastings; I’ve a notion you’ve some stronger reason than most, for wanting to get safe across to the Palmetto State, eh? You’re a close fellow, and quite right too; but I’ve nosed out as much as that. If I hadn’t a moral certainty that we’d do the trick, as I’m an honest man, I wouldn’t say, Come with us; but it’s been made safe, as far as such touch and go work *can* be safe. You’ll promise to keep mum—chance about what I tell you, among those chattering boobies down town, I mean? Well, then, listen to me.”

And the skipper went on to tell me how he was to sail that night; how his cables were bent on a spring, ready to slip at short notice, without the delay of weighing anchor; how he had got his provisions and water on board, and every sailor and every ounce of coal embarked. He also mentioned that he was to take on board, at the last moment, a most excellent and experienced pilot, who had been recommended by the resident agent of the Confederate Government. Lastly, he informed me that several Southern gentlemen, some of them accompanied by their wives and children, returning from Europe, and who had long awaited a safe means of transport, were to be passengers on board the *Bonnybell*. And with good show of reason Captain Pritchard bade me reflect whether these persons—who, if taken, would be punished as traitors by the vindictive authorities at Washington—had not more at stake than I could possibly have, and were not likely to be good judges of the steamer’s prospects as regarded the run.

“And the fare is fifteen guineas? Never mind, captain, I’ll be one of your passengers. When do you start?”

The commander’s voice sunk to a whisper as he told me that at sunset every landsman must come on board, taking boat at some secluded jetty, to avoid prying eyes; and using all reasonable caution, since Nassau teemed with Northern spies. Half an hour after sundown he was to hoist a signal, which was to be replied to; and then the pilot would come off, and the steamer would stand out to sea.

"After dark," muttered Pritchard, with an oath, "we may hope to get past that Yankee thief that hangs about the island. The governor made her keep at the distance of one marine league, but she's always sneaking in,—now for coal, now for bread, now because her engine's out of order; and the United States consul communicates with her every day. I tell you, shipmate, there isn't one of us that isn't dogged up and down by rascals in Federal hire. See there! that mulatto hound has been after me these four days," pointing out a dark-complexioned fellow in the dress of a stevedore, who, on seeing himself observed, as he stood under the geranium hedge, lay down with well-feigned nonchalance, and lit his pipe.

It was settled now. I was to leave the island that very night; and as I thought of Jane Graysbrook in her quiet English home, thinking of me and praying for my safety, I felt a fervent wish to succeed. It was with new interest that I spent that afternoon in lounging and smoking Cuban cigars under the shade of a green-painted verandah, watching the blue sea, the many masts, the long, swift steamer lying so quiescent on the gentle heave of the summer surge, and the black hull and white funnels of the Yankee war-vessel that glided to and fro in front of the roadstead, like some hungry shark swimming slowly backwards and forwards across the bar of a harbour.

After dinner I paid my bill at the "Royal William," the snug timber-built hostelry, half inn, half boarding-house, where I had been advised to put up, and hired a negro to carry down my slender amount of luggage to the shore. Avoiding the main quay, as I had been directed to do, I struck off through a waterside lane, at the end of which was a small wharf, overlooked by mean wooden buildings, and festooned with flat fish of strange shapes, rays, black-backs, and thorn-fish, which were hung on strings to dry. Here there were two or three punts and dories, languidly rising and falling with the slow heave of the sea; queer, ill-painted barks enough, and very unlike the spruce pleasure-boats at the grand quay, but better suited to my purpose. A dory was soon hired; and with an old black fisherman and his woolly-pated son at the oars, we shot merrily out into the broad, smooth waters of the bay.

"Massa want to be put on board de *Bonnybell*? Very well, sar.—'ull 'um starboard oar, you Peter boy; 'tupid black nigger, pull, I tell ou, and get boat's head round. *Bonnybell* 's out beyond 'um brigs onder!"

The evening star was shining with pointed light, and there was a great tain or splash of blushing crimson flecking all the western sea, where the sun had just gone down. Night was coming on in the sudden way that certains to the tropics; and, as if the drop scene of a theatre had fallen, there was a complete change in the appearance of the island and its sheltered bay. A hazy mist, like floating clouds of white gauze, rolled from the eastward over the water, and through it the ships loomed like phantom

vessels. The sky had deepened to the colour of indigo ; the brief twilight darkened with startling abruptness ; and the jarring cries of night-birds suddenly arose from the brake-grown creeks that furrowed the island.

"Here de steamer, sar !—*Bonnybell* ahoy ! gentleman passenger come aboard, and want side-rope.—You, Peter, catch hold ob de boathook.—Dat all de luggage—quite proper ! Thank you, sar ; and I beg, massa, for lily-white sixpence to drink 'um health and good voyage."

And presently old Peter and young Peter, grinning an amicable farewell, cast off their hold of the steamer's bulwarks, and paddled off shorewards. I found a good deal of quiet bustle and suppressed excitement on board the *Bonnybell*. The fires were banked up ; the swarthy faces and red shirts of the engineer and his gang were visible at the hatch of their Cyclopean den, getting a breath of the cool breeze before starting. Some brass guns, that had been hidden under fruit-baskets, hencoops, and tarpaulins, were visible enough now ; and beside them lay piled little heaps of round shot. The crew bustled to and fro, and the captain was so busy that he could return but a brief word and a nod to my greeting. The sky grew darker, and surrounding objects dimmer, every instant.

Before long, the passengers arrived. Several Southern gentlemen, a few ladies and children, all making their way back from Europe to their homes in Carolina or Virginia by this dangerous route, and all in peril of harsh imprisonment, at least, in the event of capture. By the uncertain light I could see that most of them were pale and nervous ; but they talked in an undertone among themselves, and did not appear anxious to enter into conversation with strangers.

"Get up steam !"

By the time the hoarse roar of the escaping vapour grew loud and menacing there was a fresh bustle on deck, and I heard the captain give orders to "stand by" for slipping from the moorings, and to hoist the signal, as we only waited for the pilot.

"There they are, slick and right—three red lights and a green one!" murmured a tall Virginian at my elbow ; and looking up, I saw the coloured lamps glimmer from the masthead. Instantly they were answered by a similar signal from some window on shore.

"We'll soon see the pilot now," said Pritchard, rubbing his hands in a cheery manner ; "the signal's made and repeated. In ten minutes our man will be with us. Hilloa !—boat ahoy !—what d'ye want ?"

"*Bonnybell* ahoy !" was the rejoinder, in a shrill, harsh voice, cautiously lowered for the occasion ; "pilot wants to come on board."

There was a stir and a start of surprise among those on deck, and as a rope was thrown to the boatmen, Captain Pritchard bent over the side, exclaiming,—

"You're uncommon quick, my hearty. If you've come from shore since the lights were hoisted, you must be own cousin to the *Flying Dutchman*. Are you sure you're our pilot ?"

"I'm the pilot engaged by Colonel Jeremy Carter, of Spottsylvania, if that'll do," answered a very tall, bony, black-haired man, as he actively ascended the side. "Zack Foster's my name, and I know every inch about Charleston, where I was raised."

While the captain, reassured by the mention of Colonel Carter's name, gave hasty orders to cast off the cable, and go ahead, I, in common with the rest of the passengers, and the unoccupied portion of the crew, looked with much interest at the new comer. The latter was about forty years of age, long and lean of figure, with a hardy, sun-browned face. There was no mistaking the resolute air and daring of the man; his mouth was as firm as iron, though a little dry humour seemed to lurk about his lips; and I hardly liked the expression of his half-shut eyes, which had a lazy cunning in their dark glance. Still, though dressed in a black suit of shore-going clothes, and a swallow-tailed coat of antiquated cut, there was something about Mr. Zack Foster that bespoke the thoroughbred seaman. He took no share in the proceedings, for his duty did not begin till we were clear of Nassau roadstead; but yet he seemed impatient for the start, gnawing viciously at his quid, and drumming on the taffrail with a finger that seemed as hard and brown as bronze.

It was an anxious time when the *Bonnybell*, under a full head of steam, went darting out of the bay; her look-outs straining their eyes to pierce the mist, and give warning to the helmsman of vessels ahead; while Pritchard walked to and fro, too fidgety and eager to endure conversation, listening very instant for some sound which might indicate that the Federal cruiser had taken the alarm. But on we went, without check or hindrance; and we all drew our breath more freely as the lights of the town began one by one to vanish, as if the sea had swallowed them, and the dark headlands faded away into obscurity. The American gunboat was neither seen nor felt, a circumstance which I did not the less regret because I perceived, not only by the display of the cannon alluded to, but by the resolute demeanour of several of the crew, who stood grouped about a couple of uncovered arm-chests, that our pigmy foe would not have found an entirely unresisting prize.

One slight circumstance, hardly, as I thought, worth mentioning, did occur before we had run half a mile to seaward. There came a long, faint hail, from so great a distance as to be hardly distinguishable even by a sailor's practised ear, but which was announced to be addressed to us.

"Some boat, with a message perhaps for a passenger. The lubbers deserve rope's-ending for being so late. Can I lie-to safely, do you think?" said Pritchard to the pilot, irresolutely, and giving the word, "Slacken speed!" What the pilot answered I know not. I only caught the concluding phrase,—

"Yankee tricks; so, cap., you'd best look sharp about you."

So Pritchard thought. He gave the word to go on at full speed, and we heard no more about the matter.

The run was speedy and pleasant, over a dimpling summer sea, with no boisterous behaviour on Neptune's part to make even the lady passengers uneasy. We saw several vessels, but none of a hostile character, and the voyage was as agreeable and safe hitherto as any yachting excursion in holiday waters. We were all disposed to be pleased; and the pilot, although a saturnine and morose personage, viewed through this rose-coloured haze of satisfaction and hope, became a popular man on board. Captain Pritchard pronounced him worth his weight in gold; for if there were no gales or rough seas to thwart our purpose, fogs were rather frequent, and here the pilot's intimate acquaintance with the rocks, shoals, and islets, many of which were not noted down in the chart, more than once saved the *Bonnybell* from an ugly thump upon some hidden obstacle. For an American, Zack Foster was singularly silent; yet there was something elephantine about his high forehead and narrow dark eyes which suggested shrewdness rather than vacuity. He did his work, answered when spoken to, but seldom addressed any one.

"Land ho!" sung out the look-out man at the masthead, and Pritchard and the pilot, who were poring together over the map close to the binnacle, looked up, while the passengers edged nearer to hear the news. Pritchard lifted his telescope, while Foster went aloft for a better view.

"Edisto Island, as I said, cap.!" hailed the pilot; "and beyond it is the Carolina coast.—We're close to home, gentlemen and ladies."

There was a cheer from the little group gathered near the helm, but directly afterwards came two shrill cries of "Sail ho!"

"Uncle Sam's barkers. We must put out a few miles yet, cap.," said the pilot, as he leisurely descended the rope ladder. There were many good glasses on board, and we all gazed eagerly through them, and with beating hearts we recognized the portholes, the grinning cannon, the "star-spangled" flags, and warlike display of the Federal blockading squadron. The steamer was put about, and we stood further out, until shore and ships were alike lost to view. The disappointment of the passengers, who had been granted a mere glimpse of the land that to them was home, was considerable; but none could doubt the prudence of delaying our entry into Charleston Harbour until night should assist us in eluding the hostile war-vessels. There was no going to bed on board the *Bonnybell* that night; we all kept to the deck, eagerly gazing out over the sparkling and phosphorescent sea, glimmering and glancing with St. Elmo's fires. There was a pale young moon—a mere sickle of silver—in the sky; and objects were so faintly discernible that the utmost caution was necessary. The second mate took the helm, while the first mate superintended the almost constant heaving of the lead, and the captain and pilot stood on the forecastle, noting the replies of the sailor, chanted as they were in a shrill monotone, in accordance with old custom.

"Ten fathoms sheer!—By the deep, nine!—By the mark, seven!" called out the leadsmen, from the chains.

"Water allays does shoal here, cap. I know the channel, though, as well as I know my parlour ashore, at Nantucket—at Savannah, I mean," said the pilot, with some confusion.

"By the mark, five!" was the next call.

Captain Pritchard here grew uneasy. He did not pretend to equal the pilot in local knowledge, but he was too good a seaman not to take alarm at the abrupt lessening of the depth of the water. He gave orders to reduce the speed, and we moved but slowly on, the lead going as before.

"Are you sure, Mr. Foster, you are not mistaken? It seems to me the water shoals at the rate of a fathom for every hundred yards traversed. We may have missed the Swash, left Moultrie to leeward, and got into the network of sandbanks near.—Hilloa! what's that ahead of us? Boats, as I'm a sinner!"

At the same moment the pilot thrust his hand rapidly into the breast of his coat, drew out something, and flung it on the deck, where it instantly began to sputter and hiss, and directly afterwards the lurid glare of a blue-light flashed through the darkness, showing funnel and rigging, the pale faces of the passengers, the narrow channel of fretted water, and the sandy islets on either bow. Nor was this all, for by the ghastly light we could distinguish two dark objects on the foamy sea ahead of us—boats, full of men, pulling swiftly but noiselessly towards us, and, no doubt, with muffled oars.

"By the mark, two!—Shoal water—we're aground!" cried an ill-boding voice, that of the sailor in the chains; and the *Bonnybell* came suddenly to a check, throwing most of the landsmen from their feet, while the ominous scrooping of the keel told that the steamer was aground. A loud clamour instantly arose, many voices shouting at once in tones of inquiry, dismay, or command; but even above this turmoil arose the hurrah of those who manned the boats, and who now came dashing up, pulling and cheering like madmen.

"Treachery! treachery!" cried several of the passengers and crew, pointing to where the pilot stood beside the blue-light that his own perfidious hand had kindled; while already the man-of-war's men, for such we could not doubt them to be, began to scramble on board.

"The Yankee bloodhounds, sure enough; but *you* shall not live to share the prize-money!" exclaimed Pritchard, snatching up a handspike, and aiming a blow at Mr. Zack Foster, that would have been a lethal stroke, had not that astute person swerved aside, receiving the weapon on his left shoulder. Our men set up a faint cheer, and a shot was fired, luckily without effect. But resistance would have been madness, so thickly did the American sailors crowd up our gangway, their pistols and cutlasses ready for the fray; while among them were nine or ten marines, well armed with musket and bayonet, and who drove the *Bonnybell's*

crew below hatches without any serious show of fighting. The Federal lieutenant in command, to do him justice, seemed anxious that no needless violence should be used; and while proclaiming the vessel a prize to the boats of the U.S. war-brig *Dacotah*, he yet restrained the fury of that precious guide, Mr. Zack Foster, who had recovered from the effects of his knock-down blow, drawn a bowie-knife, and rushed upon Pritchard, who was struggling in the hands of his captors.

"Gently, sir," said the lieutenant; "gently, Quartermaster Fitch. These caged birds are under Uncle Sam's protection, and I cannot allow any ill-usage of my prisoners. Do you hear me, sir?"

"Quartermaster!" exclaimed poor Captain Pritchard, as his wrists were thrust into the handcuffs. "You don't mean that that double-dyed villain, that Judas of a pilot, is a Yankee petty officer, after all! I wish I'd only guessed the truth a few hours back, and—if I swung for it—I'd have chucked the spy overboard as I would a mangy puppy!"

The lieutenant made no answer, but ordered the captain and mates to be sent below, and proceeded at once to seize the steamer's papers, to place the passengers under arrest, and to take steps for getting the *Bonnybell* off the sandbank. He then compelled the engineer to set the machinery at work, and we ran down, under the skilful pilotage of Mr. Fitch, to Edisto Island; in which anchorage we came to our moorings, under the guns of the *Dacotah*, and within a short distance of several other vessels of the blockading squadron. Here we spent the night, miserably enough; sentries mounting guard at the hatchways with fixed bayonets, and the whole of the passengers being huddled together in the chief cabin. My own feelings were none of the most enviable, but the predicament of the Southerners on board was even worse; and the curses and muttered complaints of the male passengers, for whom a long detention, at the least, was in store, mingled with the weeping and passionate grief of the women.

In the morning a commission of American officers came on board, and held a cursory inspection of the ship's papers and cargo. Nothing could be more conclusive. Sabres, saddles, firearms, medicines, and percussion caps, made up four-fifths of our freight. Our passenger list comprised many noted foes of the Washington Government. It was certain that the *Bonnybell* would be condemned by any prize court; and it was at once decided to send her round, under her present guardianship, to Hampton Roads, to be adjudicated upon.

My heart had never been so heavy as during that wretched voyage northwards, with the stars and stripes flying at our masthead, where lately the British flag had flown so merrily. It was not on account of any real danger to myself that I was thus depressed. A few weeks' imprisonment in some gloomy Federal fort was the worst fate that could befall me; and my release was certain when my neutrality was once established. But the delay would be fatal to the purpose which had brought me to America. I should either not reach South Carolina at all, or I should reach it too

late. The 26th proximo—always terribly near—would arrive while I was still a prisoner, and the respected old firm of Graysbrook and Freek would figure in the *Gazette*. My own prospects would be blighted, or at least deeply injured, by the ruin of my kind old employer; and, worst of all, poor pretty Jane was lost to me. What could I do? Mr. Graysbrook, I knew, was too just—Jane too kind—to blame me for the break-down of my hopes and plans; but still—

“That’s the town of Hampton, mister, and yon’s the camp of our invincible rebel-whipping troops; and there’s the fort, where you are like to be located a goodish time, I some think,” said a drawling voice, breaking in upon my bitter reflections just as the *Bonnybell’s* anchor bit the ground in Hampton Roads. I turned, and shrank instinctively back from the hateful spy, Foster, or Fitch, who stood at my elbow, with an exultant twinkle in his rascally eyes. He could not but observe my gesture, for he went on,—“No malice, Britisher; you’ll be none the worse, after all; and you’ll be let out in a week or two, if our Sec. of State happens to care about humouring your rotten old country. Them Southern chaps hev more reason to look ugly than you hev, I can tell you. But wasn’t the thing smart, and prettily done?—Answer me that. Our consul spent a considerable lump of dollars, I calculate, for information about what this *Bonnybell* was doing at Nassau. Then we found out the signal and passwords, and out come I,—Dan Fitch, of the U.S. navy,—and get welcomed aboard as the pilot chosen by that bloody rebel, Colonel Carter. And before we get clar off, the real pilot’s canoe gives chase, and they hail and hail till they’re hoarse, and your blind bat of a British captain, he takes no notice—ha! ha! You must sing small, you must, you old-country folks, when you rub shoulders with Columbia’s children. Here comes the boat, with the marshal aboard her.”

The wretch spoke truly. The pinnacle that now ran alongside was that of the Federal provost-marshal; and we, the prisoners, with but few necessities selected from our baggage, were compelled to embark in her, and were taken on shore.

At the gate of the fort that was to be our prison, a number of negroes, Irish labourers, straggling soldiers, and shrill-voiced women were crowding around a cart, which was escorted by two cavalry men, in their faded blue jackets. As we drew near, and as the marshal pompously demanded the meaning of this encumbrance, the mob divided, and we could see that the helpless form of a wounded man, wrapped in a blood-stained blanket, was being lifted out of the cart.

“Give him a dhrink, some of you. A little spherits in the wather would revive the poor crayture,” said a red-haired Irishwoman in the crowd; and then the weak voice of the sufferer reached me, and, to my surprise, seemed familiar to my ears. Could it be? Yes—not a doubt of it; it was Christopher Loring, the man I had come across the Atlantic to seek out, the trusted depository of the funds for want of which Graysbrook and Freek must suspend payment. Loring it was; though the

wan, pinched face, on which death's mark was already visible, ~~was~~ miserably changed from the handsome, healthy countenance of my former fellow-clerk, gay Kit Loring. He knew me at once, and closed his eyes ~~groaning~~; but immediately afterwards looked wistfully up in my face and held out his feeble hand, murmuring something about "forgiveness" and "restitution," and that he hoped I would sit beside him till he died, "for the sake of old times."

"He is bleeding to death," the surgeon said.

"Bleeding inwardly, too; so the doctors can't do a cent's worth of good," said one of the troopers. "It was Jem that plugged him with a bullet, for trying to sneak past our videttes; but I believe he's no rebel, after all."

So, indeed, it turned out. Poor wretch, he died within the hour; but preserved his faculties long enough to make a confession, which was reduced to writing by the Governor of the Fort. He had gone out to America, meaning honestly, so he protested. But it chanced that the cotton in question had been made away with—burned, I believe, in some accidental conflagration, and the money in Loring's charge could not be spent as Mr. Graysbrook had directed. After long and fruitless waiting, and three attempts to communicate with his employer for instructions (the letters were intercepted by the blockading fleet, like those of Mr. Graysbrook), Loring had yielded to the temptation of appropriating the money to his own use. He had formed an intimacy with a notorious blackleg and sharper, from New Orleans, who had proposed to him a partnership; and this pair of worthies had designed to make their way north, and to set up a gaming-house in Washington. In attempting, however, to elude the frontier guards, Loring's partner had been shot dead, and he himself mortally wounded. He died professing much penitence, begging me to say to Mr. Graysbrook that he had "never known peace" since his wrongdoing, and calling on all present to bear witness that the large sum found on his person was the property of the House.

Little more remains to be told. The British Legation promptly procured my release, on a proper representation of the case being made, and I was permitted to return home, carrying with me the money found on the person of the defaulter, and which was scarcely diminished by any extravagance of his. I arrived at Liverpool on the evening of the 25th, travelled all night, and at ten next morning—the morning of the dreaded 26th—I was at my post in the office, and was able to place the money in the merchant's hands. The bills were paid, and not the shadow of a suspicion ever fell upon the honoured name of our firm. Mr. Graysbrook was not ungrateful. He was even better than his word; for not only am I the happy husband of Jane Graysbrook, and in receipt of Loring's former salary and authority in the counting-house, but it has been kindly notified to me that I am to be taken into partnership before the year comes to a close—the youngest partner, our chief says, with good-humoured reproach, that ever figured on the ledger of Graysbrook and Fresh.

STRAWS IN THE STREAM.

O. V.—THE STRAWS THAT FLOAT UPON THE STREAM AT BOULOGNE.

DURING the past season, or rather, the season that is at its height now, Boulogne has been in a state, not of siege, but of actual foreign occupation; that peaceful occupation, however, which is in no way associated with hostility, and which, the longer it continues, adds strength to the guarantee which the course of events of recent years has established against the advent anywhere of "occupations" in a belligerent sense. Boulogne this summer opened its new *establishment*, or magnificent building, on the sands and over against the pier,—a splendid object from the sea as the boat sights land on its passage from Folkestone. The opening of this new bathing establishment—which is not wholly devoted to bathing purposes, but embraces an assembly-room, a reading-room, billiard-rooms, and its gardens on its land side beautifully laid out for promenading—has caused a kind of rush upon Boulogne this year; and it has been filled to overflowing with a mixed migratory population, which might be, and most probably at this moment is, a study for the delineation of men and manners, women and society, incidents and events in the progress of what is conventionally designated "the world,"—the designation having reference to those who dwell in cities upon the globe, and not to the material globe itself.

Yes; for such a delineator, for the keen observer, and for the facile pen, there is much for contemplation in the society, both permanent and transient, of Boulogne. Of the resident population of Boulogne—of course I am speaking of and to English people—it would not be difficult to trace the manners and customs, the habits and idiosyncrasies, that are acquired by a foreign residence of any duration. These characteristics are patent to the observer; but of the migratory population—those social birds of flight, not to say conspicuous, plumage, which the summer sun attracts to shoals to such a locality as that in which I am now writing—it is not so facile descriptively to speak.

Boulogne, in the height of its season—and that is just now,—is a very advantageous place in which to study English character of a particular type. I will not attempt to indicate those who form the great bulk of the visitors to this favoured spot. They are an admixture, of course, the chief element of which is probably an intermediate class; and the probability will all the stronger when their bearing and general personal exhibition, if I may so express myself, are closely studied. A good portion of these seem to bring with them some of the most objectionable features of middle-class society in England, entirely separated from its better element of hearty generosity and open-handed liberality which characterize the middle classes when at home in England. To speak with a little more particularity, and with regard to social types, the mean Englishman, for instance, tolerably

well to do, appears to be a character that is very commonly met with here in Boulogne in those bright days of autumn-time when the clear blue sea is indeed a magnet which few can effectually resist. Now, a mean Englishman is a very common character at home; every one has an acquaintance, no matter how limited the social circle, who is the "mean screw" of that circle; but then such characters are almost lost, or at all events are comparatively obscured, in the mighty vortex of a great, an advancing, and, speaking generally and nationally, a generous people. Bring ten thousand English people to Boulogne, however, and you gather together a much greater proportion of the objectionable element than in the same number would be met with at home. I apprehend that no psychologist has ever yet studied such a social fact, as fact it is.

But the crowd from England nevertheless contains a plentiful admixture of the hearty and the generous, enough to make one indeed entirely satisfied with one's connection with the old land in which our grand old institutions are planted. Although we may find a good sprinkling of the English people in Boulogne, we are yet relieved from the contemplation of much of the vulgarity which is characteristic, to a certain extent, of the upper stratum of the middle class. Perhaps, however, I have to acknowledge that the vulgarity is more resident than transient in Boulogne. Well, a dissertation upon social status amongst the resident English in Boulogne may possibly be amusing, and I think it will be instructive.

There is a very extensive resident English population in Boulogne. It is, I believe, counted by thousands; and I have never sojourned in a place that appeared to offer more natural attractions. It has every requisite for a pleasure centre, and I have met amongst the English residents here the sterling and the true, the generous and the high-minded, the large heart and the expanded intellect; but then, again, I have been compelled to note that the English society of Boulogne is grievously leavened, and it is of that leaven that I propose to speak.

The French have a phrase, which is expressive, in designation of a class that is very extensive in England, and who appear inevitably to find their way in considerable numbers to places like Boulogne. The *nouveau-riches*, taken as a class, are in my eyes very objectionable, and I can without difficulty trace the genus in Boulogne. They are objectionable in the position—the social status—which they attempt to assume. Of course, vulgarity aping refinement is a characteristic that is co-extensive with civilized life; but for those who would desire to study it, I should say that Boulogne presents peculiarly favourable opportunities. The *nouveau-riches* abound in Boulogne. The genteel circle is of course circumscribed; I mean that circle which the *nouveau-riches* themselves designate as genteel, and the line of demarcation is easily traceable. To say that the intellect is on a par with the education of the class is simply to utter a truism. Born to honest labour or the shop, education was not a gift conferred

pon them by art, any more than intellect was conferred by nature. The *nouveau-riches* were born lucky; the best material inheritance—for in results it is a material inheritance—that a man can be blessed with, according to the old adage. Mrs. Claythumb, whose husband, probably, was lucky at “the diggins,” is an interesting specimen of the *nouveau-riches*. He is exceedingly genteel when she gets to Boulogne. She is not quitearty yet in one respect, although she is *forte* enough in another, and she is unmistakably stout. Mrs. Claythumb’s husband has made money somewhere, somehow; and when Mrs. Claythumb goes to Boulogne, she is thoroughly impressed with the notion that money makes the man; and she makes desperate efforts to get into good society, and to snub everybody who is not grand. In hot weather, when she goes to church, she inspires with politeness to the nobs of the congregation, and all her piety tinged with reverence for people in high life, or what she thinks is high life. Oh, if she could only catch a member of parliament passing through the town, even if his name were unknown to the great world, or even if the name were Buggins, ay, even if it were only half that name, it would be a source of unalloyed bliss to her, if it were supplemented with the letters M.P.

But yet the Claythumbs must live an unenjoyable life. They cannot be like “y^e gentlemen of England.” They do not live at home at ease. How can they live at ease in their newly fledged dignity? When Claythumb worked in jack-boots, and Mrs. Claythumb tucked up her sleeves or the wash-tub, they were far happier than they are now in their villa in the *Route de Paris*. It is true that the notions of Mrs. Claythumb have changed, and she is under the impression that she was born to adorn a circle; but then she is mistaken, she labours under a delusion which is destructive of her happiness. A flowing silk dress upon a rotund figure, which has a tendency to the unctuous, does not supply the materials for real gentility, any more than a sow’s ear does for a silk purse. Mrs. Claythumb, when she lives in Boulogne or its neighbourhood, evidently fancies that it does. Then there is Mr. Claythumb; he is not one whit behind his rotund spouse with regard to empty assumption. His hands are still horny—they must ever be so; and the man might be honestly proud of the sign, for it is the result of hard toil and laborious exertion with those implements which Tubal-Cain first fashioned. But he is not proud of the sign. He is now of the *nouveaux-riches*, and so the hard hand must be concealed by the soft glove. Oh, Claythumb, what would you have said to a man who had appeared in Bendigo, say in your “location,” with a pair of kid gloves on? Why, you and Mrs. Claythumb would have cried out that he was unfit for Australia, and ought to go back to London for the Casino. And you would have been quite right, Claythumb. But then you know, Claythumb, that people cannot see themselves in the same light that lookers-on do. The immortal bard of the highlands uttered true philosophy when he exclaimed,—

"Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us,
It wad fra mony a trouble free us,
An' foolish notion."

The gaudy dignity of the Claythumbs in Boulogne is of course ridiculous in the eyes of those who are "the ithers that see it," but the Claythumbs cannot see it themselves. The *nouveau-riches* are always bound up in themselves, and they have always a strange infatuation. They invariably hold themselves aloof, or affect to do so, from the really refined, who do not desire their association, and only tolerate it when the dictates of good breeding require such toleration.

The *nouveau-riches*—the fungi, as we should call them at home—of society are more extensively produced by England than any other country, not excepting America. When I speak of England, of course I include the colonies. Boulogne offers peculiar attractions to this class. Boulogne is on the Continent, and yet it is close at home; and as far as the fungi are concerned it is England, because the language around them is English. There is, under these circumstances, an exclusiveness which is exactly in accordance with the newly generated feelings of the *nouveau-riches*.

There is, however, in Boulogne some very estimable society. Patrician descent may not be extensively represented amongst the English of Boulogne; but there is here and there that which is far better. There is the cultivated mind; there is the travelled intelligence; there is the refinement of civilized life, which can be developed only through the agency of early association; and there is a wide gap between these and the class represented by Mr. and Mrs. Claythumb. Both classes walk in common in the Tintelleries, both classes may be seen together in the market-place on market-days; but the bearing of the members of each is as distinct as that between the denizens of the *cuisine* and the boudoir. Claythumb has his white kid glove on; Mrs. Claythumb has her satin dress expanding round her form in ample folds; but the deportment of the two as plainly indicates the superior gentility of the interesting pair, as though they each bore a placard upon their backs, with the announcement thereon, "We are of the fungi family."

Who are they who crawl about a small town, sometimes as valetudinarians, sometimes as loungers, perhaps sometimes as expatriated citizens, always and everywhere as insidious, mischief-making, sinister, and surreptitious meddlers—who are they? what are they? In England we have a generic term for the race, and we designate them as backbiters. From what I have seen and what I have heard, there can be little doubt that the hateful genus thrives, if it does not flourish, in Boulogne. The specimens of this race may be seen in the Grande Rue and other principal streets, especially if the weather be fine, for fine weather brings them out as it does many other noxious things. The English nation is, indeed, grievously libelled by some of its representatives in Boulogne. Happily, they are not

true specimens of the English people, but rather the excrescent refuse of society at home. Whence do they come? and why are they here in Boulogne? are pertinent questions. Are they but a leaven? or do they pervade the whole of the English society in Boulogne? The Vanity Fair of Boulogne can be tolerated. Its frivolities, its petty cliques, its circles striving upon nothing to outdo each other in something; its meanness behind the curtain, and its tinselled show in front; its mock gentility and its mock religion; its small jealousies and its great pretences; its vulgar elements and its superior connections, are characteristics that are looked for in all small societies such as the English in Boulogne, and they are mildly satirized and indulgently tolerated. But sinuously winding in and about this English society in Boulogne, the sinuosity being slimy in its course, may easily be discerned the backbiting race to whom I have alluded. They are indeed a wretched species, and they invade even sacred precincts and holy spots. They not only violate friendship, but they make friendship, or what passes for it, a cloak that serves simultaneously to hide and assist their miserable designs.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, in its English society, is black with them. It is true that there is no especial outward characteristic by which to identify them, although their presence is but too easily detected. Walk down the Grande Rue when the sun is shining, and the probability is that you will jostle one of the amiable genus; spend an evening with a dozen friends, and the slimy thing is almost sure to be there. Some specimens of the character are toothless, and jabber; others are sleek, slimy, and plausible; all are hateful.

And yet the English generally, and the backbiters and scandalmongers particularly, are a very pious race, and they support no less than six Protestant places of worship. But what is the position of the English Church in Boulogne? Doubtless that has been a question that has often suggested itself to English people, whether permanently resident, or only temporarily sojourning in the town. There can be no doubt that the position of the English Church in Boulogne is a very anomalous one. It professes to be a branch of the English Establishment, and yet it presents this very marked and substantial difference, that, while the Church in England is an endowed establishment, the branch in Boulogne is wholly self-supporting, and that support borders slightly on the ludicrous. The several English places of religious worship are so many commercial speculations, and there is constantly an undercurrent of touting for pious customers going on. One temple has an announcement to the effect that that is the old original establishment, and that the charges are reasonable; another proclaims that it is the Hall of Piety of the British chaplain,—a title which the competitors of the reverend pastor declare to be self-assumed, and to have no warrant in authority. Indeed, the proprietor of the old original claims the office in right of priority of settlement, and I think his claim ought to be allowed. Another reverend speculator boldly announces on his eccle-

siastical edifice that his rent and taxes, and salary of organist, amount to so much, and therefore it is necessary that the congregation should not forget the box. I fancy, however, that Protestant pastorship is not a good speculation in Boulogne, although unquestionably all the temples thereof are very numerous attended. Still, a wet Sunday is a matter of serious consequence to the reverend lessee, because such a morning must materially affect the receipts at the door. The money so collected is always carried into the vestry, and there counted before the sermon commences; and I can fancy the anxious query of the reverend manager to the collector at the door, "Well, Splinterfog, not a very good house this morning, I'm afraid?" to which, in all probability, Splinterfog, who has a per-centage on the receipts, may dolefully reply, "It is like their luck; just as he wanted to go to England for a fortnight, they had had four successive wet Sunday mornings;" and Splinterfog is a most desirable collector, for he has an eye that will detect half a street's length off the pious individual who intends to try and *wriggle* into the church without paying. Such an attempt, however, has never been known to succeed with Splinterfog.

It will be understood that the voluntary system is fully recognized here in Boulogne; and although there is a nominal episcopal authority acknowledged, I question whether such an authority actually exists. The theory of the Church in England is, that all foreign places where there are English Protestant churches are under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Bishop of London; but I apprehend that, were this really the case, the metropolitan bishop would order the conduct of things in a very different manner. The English Church in Boulogne is anomalous every way. It acknowledges an authority which is not exercised, and it exists upon a principle that is not recognized in the mother church. Of all places in the world, I should say that Boulogne is about the last in which to test the voluntary system. Such is the peculiar position of the English Church in Boulogne, that at present it can only be supported upon a system of commercial competition. It is not for me to discuss whether this is a matter for the English Church or the English residents; but I may say this, that the system is not creditable to either. If the Protestant Church in Boulogne is simply intended to be a Vanity Fair in fine weather, it certainly answers its purpose. Expensive and expansive dresses are made to be exhibited as well as to be worn, and fashionable piety must of course be properly decked. Who can doubt that that "duck of a bonnet," and that "lovely shot silk" enormity, that were specially ordered to be home on Saturday night, were intended for humble exhibition on the Sunday morning? although, unfortunately, the state of the weather necessitated a hackney coach (a franc and a half the course, and Jarvey did not get anything *pour boire*); but this humility should at all events, if it must be displayed, be accompanied by considerations beyond the exhibition of that which crinoline supports. Different people, of course, go to a church with *different motives*. It is not for me to criticize those motives, nor shall I

attempt to do so. I am watching the straws as they float upon the great stream of life, and I have been making general observations upon a general subject; and the conclusion upon those observations that I have arrived at is, that the position of the English Church in Boulogne is certainly not a satisfactory one. The only similarity between a church and a theatre is that they both contain audiences. It is true that it may be argued that they are, or ought to be, both moral teachers. In attracting an audience, however, a theatre has a great advantage over a church, inasmuch as it can placard the walls with large posters, announcing the performances of the night. If the existing position of the English Church in Boulogne be a sound one, I do not see why a similar kind of attraction should not be adopted with regard to the services that are performed. Indeed, a very considerable step in that direction has been made.

The fleeting pleasure-seekers of Boulogne do not see much of the intense piety that animates the resident body of English. "See how these Christians love one another!" was a tribute that was paid by one of old to a race that was not so extensive then as it is now. The Christians in those days were primitive in their habits, simple in their attire, meek in their behaviour, devout in their faith, resigned in their sufferings, and entertained no desire to visit Vanity Fair. The Christians of the present day in Boulogne are far better dressed than those of old—some of them; but they do not so much love one another. With a change of dress has come a change of manners, if not of faith,—a remark that may, perhaps, be of universal application. It is certainly applicable in Boulogne, where it is on every fine Sunday practically illustrated.

The Christian congregations of the English in Boulogne are a fine study for the moralist, and for the satirist also. I could wish for a few weeks to have the faculty which was possessed by the memorable ornithological prodigy of Sir Boyle Roche, of being in two or three places at once. I would, in the exercise of such a faculty, station myself at the entrance doors of the several temples of Christian charity and faith, which a great beneficence has placed at the command of our enlightened compatriots in Boulogne. In the singular plurality of the Hibernian bird aforesaid, I would follow the meek devotees who issue from the several temples to which I have referred, and I would listen to those words of Christian charity and sisterly love which trickle from the lips of satined piety and crinoline reverence. I should probably be struck by the strain of pious magnanimity with which they are responded to and echoed by expatriated respectability, whose outward characteristics are an ill-cut coat and a withered countenance.

It is pleasing on a Sunday morning to observe how naturally, and as if by the cohesion of a kind of material charity, the several congregations blend with each other, even as though it were a stream in which there could not be any possibility of an undercurrent of scandal and detraction. And yet there is such an undercurrent, as Sir Boyle Roche's bird would

very soon find out if he were in Boulogne for a week or two. Mrs. Turbantop, who goes to prayer at her temple, praises the Lord that she does not worship at the same shrine as Mrs. Meekly, who actually has appeared in the same bonnet ever since July last.

But Mrs. Turbantop is not peculiar to Boulogne, or shall I say indigenous? Oh, preposterous! She may be met with in many quarters of the globe; and wherever the English congregate on the continent of Europe especially if they support an offshoot of the national church, she is sure to be found amongst them. She may be seen at Baden-Baden flushed with excitement over the gaming-table, and you may see her red in the face in her pew the next day, lifting up her eyes, praising the Lord that she is not as other people are, and showing her bonnet to admirers around. She may be observed at Brussels and at Paris, I have followed her at Cheltenham and at Brighton, and I have smiled upon her in the Tintelleries. Could I, therefore, point her out as a Boulogne speciality? Assuredly not. But that dear Mrs. Sparkle, whom I so frequently meet on the pier, and who is such a favourite with those dear girls the Smirkingtons, who, in dresses, looped over their crimson petticoats, are seen to such advantage on a windy day,—she never can be mistaken for a Turbantop. She has a merry laugh and a sparkling eye every day, and on Sunday goes to church quietly. No, dear Mrs. Sparkle; you are much too jolly, much too pleasant every way, to admit of such an association. I take off my hat admiringly to you, Mrs. Sparkle.

Oh, indeed, the Christian congregations in Boulogne amongst our country patriots are, as I have said, a great study. I have entered but upon the threshold of the subject. I have taken the Claythumbs, and the Turbantops, and the Skinnyfords, as types amongst many; but there are many others that I could turn my literary lorgnette upon, who are equally admirable.

English society in Boulogne! What is it? Can it be analyzed? I think the process would be difficult. There are all the outward social characteristics of a favourite watering-place, which presents attraction beyond the sea. There are youth, beauty, and elegance in profusion, and side by side with them there is well-dressed snobbery in abundance. The youth, beauty, and elegance, however, do not form the "society," although they are of it. Well-dressed snobbery is offensive wherever it is found and I fancy it is prolific in Boulogne. There is, perhaps, a peculiar snobbery which pervades the English part in Boulogne, from the residence of half a century to the last new comer, who has settled there because he has not "settled" elsewhere.

The straws in the great life-stream of Boulogne-sur-Mer are very various. I have but indicated a few of them as they passed me lately while watching the course which that stream was taking.

C. J. C.

THE FISHERS.

Two fishers were down by the white sea-shore,
 Mending their nets on a merry May morn;
 Sons of one mother were they, and more—
 Sons of one mother at one birth born.
 And as they toil'd, and their nets grew strong,
 One look'd straight in the eyes of the other,—
 "Let us live in love our whole life long,
 For this was the last sweet word of our mother."

A maiden came down to the white sea-shore,
 With laugh so merry, and step so fleet,
 And pass'd by the rocks where the nets hung o'er,
 And together the fishers sprang up to their feet;
 And their faces flush'd with a mutual hate,
 As she smiled on the one, but frown'd on the other;
 And their breath came quick, and their teeth were set,
 And I ween they forgot the last words of their mother!

The fishers put off from the white sea-shore,
 And were far away out ere the night grew dark;
 And the maiden look'd on their forms no more,
 But when morning brake men found their bark,
 And in it two corpses stiff and cold,
 Each all red with the blood of the other;
 And tightly lock'd in a stern death-hold.—
 Oh! 'tis sad to forget the last words of our mother!

JAMES T. MILNE.

MY FIRST AND LAST BLOCKADE RUN.

THE present is not the first time that American ships and American men have filled the disagreeable and generally inglorious office of blockaders; not the first time that the offence of running a blockade, instituted by them, has been both attempted and attended with success. As a misdemeanour, it has always, when successful, been a popular one; and, under any circumstances, considered of a very venial character. In this light I must confess to have always looked upon it,—especially when free from any participation in the carriage of munitions of war or military stores, which, in my capacity of neutral, I never would have anything to do with. What I am going to write now did really occur some years ago; and to the present date, when the frequent notice in the papers of similar feats—although, as I take it, under widely different circumstances—has put it into my head to set down my own old exploit in that line, I cannot say that the remembrance has ever been much of a thorn in my conscience; although, perhaps, at my present age I should be somewhat longer in considering the consequences than I was at that time.

The year 1846 will ever be a memorable one to me. I spent the summer—having been sent to England on business by the firm I was connected with in Mexico—among my relations and friends. After a three years' absence in Mexico, it was not to be expected that I should return there at once, although the business I came over to transact was soon completed. I had landed about the middle of March, but it was not until the end of the July following that I again found myself on board the West Indian packet; and after the farewell dinner to the passengers' friends—quite an institution in those days, although now, alas! one of the past—began unpacking the traps that I required in my berth, and making the rest all snug to withstand the long roll of the "Atlantic swells." I had no lack of subjects to engage my thoughts during the voyage. There were sunny memories of good friends and English cheer, and one memory positively bathed in a halo of light; a memory of a dear little face, whose owner a few days before my departure had confessed, in a low voice, to have no objection to a life shared with me, and with whom sundry private engagements had been entered upon, tending to the transportation of the said little face to Mexico, and my arms, when I got that rise in my position in the House which I anticipated, and to which I determined it should not be my fault if I did not soon attain. Even Mexico with Jessie, according to my ideas, was something as near paradise as one could hope for in this world.

Our journey out was as favourable a one as we could wish, and we ran into Havannah harbour with the comfortable feeling of having made a quick

passage. But there we found news, which we had missed on our departure from England by a day. We heard that the Americans had declared war against Mexico, and, as a preliminary step, were blockading the port of Vera Cruz. Under these circumstances, the monthly steamer, which met the English packet at Havannah, and carried the passengers for Mexico as far on their way as Vera Cruz, was not running; and here I found the further prosecution of my journey brought to a stop. A few days after my arrival, while I was still in the first stage of chafing at this unlooked-for delay, I had letters, which had come down from the House in the city to the west coast, and thence round by the long Panama route. The House intimated that they expected I should be at Havannah on the arrival of their letters, at which place they advised me to remain until the reopening of communications with Vera Cruz. As they did not anticipate much resistance to the Americans on the part of the Mexicans, they could not think this event, together with an end of the war, to be far distant. They considered any attempts to reach the capital by the route the letter had travelled—or, indeed, by any other route than the regular east coast track—would be attended with great danger, from the length and lawless character of the roads to be traversed. Therefore, with some compliments on the value of my services, they desired that I would not engage in any venture of my life. I cannot say that I required much persuasion to deter me from this undertaking, which presented itself to me as involving a large expenditure of both pecuniary and bodily interests. Since my visit to England I had become somewhat more careful than formerly of what may be called eventualities. I had had some experience of Mexican roads when you leave the great highways. They were then, as now, even under the genial influence of peace, bad, both physically and morally speaking,—the latter term applying to the condition of the population dwelling along them. I had no confidence that, in time of war, and consequent relaxation of internal government, even little as that was, their condition would improve. Besides, I shared the sanguine belief of my employers in the quick settlement of the American difficulty. I settled down, therefore, to wait patiently at Havannah for peace, consoling myself with the thought that, as business could not be very brisk in Mexico during the war, my services would not be very much needed.

Time flew on while I lingered, kicking my heels in the gay town of many-coloured houses, where nearly every house is painted of a different colour to its neighbour. I wished a thousand times that any event might happen to induce the Yankees to leave the Mexicans alone, and let peaceable people, who only wanted to barter and make money for happy homes, pursue their lawful callings. Even if I had desired to essay reaching Mexico by the west coast, by this time Acapulco, and the other ports on that side, were also blockaded by American vessels. Letters came to me from the House by underhand means and devious routes; the House acknowledged receiving my letters in return; and still no sign appeared

of an end to the conflict, while goods in Mexico, with the importation closed on all sides, were becoming extremely scarce.

* My daily lounge along the quays of Havannah became stale. I knew, by sight, every gun in Fort Morro, as well as every embrasure in its lesser partner on the other side of the harbour entrance. The rainy season passed, and the cool north wind began to blow every evening as regularly as the setting of the sun. I began to fear a certain letter that I had written to the House must have miscarried, or that, as likely a case, they would not listen to my proposal. Tortured with the inaction, mingled with some suspense, I almost became ill. Indeed, I often wonder now that I escaped the yellow fever; I was just then a fit subject for an attack. One morning at the end of December—we had reached that month—the letter came. That morning I felt every energy within me revive. The House, with many cautions as to prudence, had consented to a trial of my plan; had enclosed the necessary documents, more valuable in reality than in appearance, and finally left all to my best endeavours on their behalf. That the firm would have agreed so readily to my proposal, I confess to have had but small hope; for the project which I had pressed upon them, and to which they had consented, was neither more nor less than to run into Vera Cruz with a cargo of the much needed goods, despite the embargo of the United States eagle. The means by which I hoped to do this successfully—already, with consent gained, half accomplished, in my eyes—were these:—From the autumnal to the vernal equinox, more or less—but in the months of December, January, and February principally—a wind known throughout the Mexican Gulf under the general name of “Norte,” although with many technical names to denote the several varieties of the species, holds sway off Vera Cruz and that coast. During the continuance of this wind, the anchorage, which is that of a mere roadstead, with no more protection than the rock in front of the town affords, on which the castle of “San Juan d’Ulloa” is built, is by no means secure. On the signs, always plainly discernible, of an approaching “Norte,” all vessels able to be moved shelter behind a sandy island of triangular shape, lying just off the shore, three miles or so to the southward of Vera Cruz. Inshore of this sandbank, called “Sacrificios,” the anchorage is very fair, and vessels are, in a measure, secure there from the effects of the dreaded wind. On the abatement of the storm—which sometimes happens in a few hours, although at times lasting three or four days, or even, as I have known by painful experience of the delay in landing goods, for a month at a time—vessels resume their former positions. From the dangerous character of the coast, studded as it is with a network of reefs and sandbanks, sailing ships arriving never, or very rarely, attempt to make the town with this wind blowing, but put back to sea until a more favourable opportunity presents itself. This enemy to commerce constituted, however, the foundation of my plan. During my peregrinations among the shipping and quays of Havannah, I had made friends with

a pilot of Vera Cruz,—a sun-brown, dashing young fellow, whom the same cause that stayed my progress prevented from returning to his beloved town. José had a father and mother in Vera Cruz, and possibly even some one dearer. I know that he often contrasted the Havannah belles with a certain gentle “Poblana,” whose charms, if his half-spoken, half-hinted descriptions were to be believed, did not suffer in his eyes by comparison. Collectively and individually, he was very anxious to see his friends again; besides, he shared his compatriots’ hatred of “Los Americanos.” Chatting one day of his former feats, and of his knowledge of every yard in the approach to his beloved birthplace, he pointed out to me a size of vessel which he declared he could take into Vera Cruz during the roughest “norther” that ever blew. I believe you may learn a man’s character, except in a few extraordinary cases, very nearly as much from his speech as from his deeds; and without having had any proof of the correctness of José’s statement, I at once believed him. I will say that I had had the idea myself before, that, with a pilot knowing every reef and shoal, the feat might be successfully accomplished. From what I knew must be the case of necessity, and from information I had received, I knew that the American fleet, when a “Norte” commenced to blow, abandoned their blockading positions, and took shelter themselves behind the island of “Sacrificios.” My plan, which I dare say you see now, was to freight a vessel with goods at Havannah; to wait outside Vera Cruz until a “norther” blew, and then to run in under José’s guidance, trusting, while the Americans were snugly lying away to the southward, to get safely under the guns of “San Juan.” With anchors that I intended shipping, I made sure we could stick there, and unload the cargo at our leisure. I had no doubt, from the cheapness of goods in Havannah, where many cargoes, owing to the blockade, had been disposed of, originally intended for Mexico, and from the scarcity of the same articles in Mexico, arising from the like cause, that, if successful, my trip would turn out a very profitable speculation. Any way, it gave me a welcome chance of reaching my destination, and ending that forced idleness which is so distasteful to a young man. I suppose the House saw that there were good grounds for probability of success, and perhaps were not unwilling, in the face of a large return, to run the risk. The facts, however, remained the same. I had the permission I coveted, and plunged at once into the task of procuring and loading a vessel.

It was rather difficult to find this last-named commodity, for my requirements were not those to supply which any large choice offered. I wanted something below a hundred tons burthen; but of necessity, for the purpose in view, stoutly built and stoutly rigged. After some search among the shipping in the harbour, I found what suited my ideas in a tight little schooner, owned and commanded in person by Captain Vrunter. The *Doctor P. Ziegel*, with a portrait of that worthy gentleman for a figure-head, which represented him of a very fresh colour, and accustomed to the

use of spectacles, was Bremen built and Bremen manned. No worse for this latter qualification, as (to my shame I say it) is felt more and more every day. English sailors and English captains against the world, when they can be kept from the abuse of strong drinks. But insurance agents and insurance underwriters, the most impartial because the most practical judges, will tell you how mighty is the sway of alcohol among our seafaring folk; and our Teutonic neighbours are not, at least, such habitual slaves to the Goddess of Grog as our own countrymen.

Captain Vrunter, a squat-shaped, fair-complexioned, and fair-haired Norseman, with prudent, rather sheep-shaped eyes, and high cheek-bones,—a simple man to appearance, but a good hand at a bargain,—had no intention to risk any of his hard-earned gains, invested in the vessel he commanded; but when a sum, sufficient to cover all his risk, was lodged with a first-class house in Havannah, to be paid over to him on the capture and consequent confiscation, or loss by wreck during the voyage, of his vessel, his objections vanished; and in consideration of a good freightage, he engaged to venture the namesake of the estimable family physician. It was expressly stipulated in the charter-party that, at any time on the voyage out when required, he was to give up the command to me or my nominee.

The loading of the schooner was not an arduous undertaking. There were more sellers than buyers at that time in Havannah. With the ample credit opened for me by the House, I had no difficulty in procuring all that I wanted; and without being accused of an inclination to boasting, I may say that a cheaper or better cargo was seldom bought. On the twenty-third day from the arrival of the letter authorizing this action—that is, in the middle of January, 1847—everything was on board, and the *Doctor P. Ziegel*, with the sails overhauled, and all thoroughly inspected aloft, was only waiting for her clearance papers before sailing. These were not very difficult to obtain; and in the afternoon of that day we raised anchor, and passed between the narrow, rocky walls of the harbour entrance, returning the hail of the sentinel pacing in the fort above. Before evening our figure-head, the Doctor, was bobbing and ducking in a most gracious manner, in answer to the attentions of a fresh sea, which continually washed his light blue inexpressibles, and even sometimes invaded the oasis of his white waistcoat higher up. We were all in sanguine spirits, and after sighting Cape Antonio, we struck right across for the Mexican coast.

The schooner came fully up to my expectations in the important—considering what depended upon it—particular of sailing powers. She answered her helm well; the crew were a fair set of men, docile and orderly, with a tall and wonderfully thin mate over them. Captain Vrunter was pleasant to deal with, and quite satisfied to shelve all responsibility in the management of his vessel on José and me. Punctually every night—although I do not think but what his own idea was that the loss of the

ship would be no loss to him—down in the smoke-begrimed, tar-smelling little cabin, Captain Vrunter drank his regulation evening glass to the toast of “Zuccess to de trib.”

The sixth day of our departure from Havannah, in the afternoon, as the sun was getting low, we saw a dark patch, obscuring part of its disc. We recognized the peak of Orizaba, the first and ever-welcome landmark in the approach to Vera Cruz. It was plainly discernible, with the faint line of mountains backing it, for a few minutes, although, from its position inland, we must have been fully fifty leagues distant from it at the time. We had had a quick run across, with a fair wind. As there were no signs that foretell the “norther” visible, we lay to, not wishing to approach nearer to the land. During the succeeding night, the Gulf Stream drifted as more to the northward, and nearer inshore; and at daybreak we saw very distinctly the snow-clad summit of Orizaba towering above the low strata of clouds. Our position was sufficiently near to our destination for our purpose, as, until a “norther” blew, it would have been folly to have approached closer to the port, with the risk of being espied by any of the cruisers stationed there. Two days passed, and we were still hanging about in our old place, tantalized by the view of Orizaba, with small variations in its appearance, when we put about to recover the position from which the current had carried us: the weather, meanwhile, was delightful. A cool westerly wind blew, which, if we had been intending to make Vera Cruz after the accustomed fashion, would have carried us into port in the course of a few hours. While we were hove to, the sailors tried fishing, and brought to view sundry curious specimens of marine life. But my nerves were in a condition of too much excitement for me to join in any such mild sport. Of all times to choose for such a freak, the “norther” was determined to absent itself now. José’s impatience at the delay took the form of half-repressed mutterings of a generally uncomplimentary character respecting the powers of all the saints he was supposed to be connected personally with. He declared a “norther” could not absent itself much longer, but must come in the course of nature.

And so it did! A fall in the barometer was the first warning of change, then the wind veered round from north-west to south-west and hove to. Sad, watery-looking clouds commenced rolling up, until the sky was quite overcast, and heavy rain began to fall. After a lull in the atmosphere, the wind, getting more to the north, began to come in short, roaring gasps, which, as night came on, settled steadily into a fierce “norther.” From the signs that heralded its approach, José predicted a “norté chocolatero,” which term is applied to a species of “norther” of very short duration, although violent while it does last. We considered his description of sufficient length for the object in view. As we required, however, daylight for the navigation of the entrance to the harbour, we eased the schooner of all the sail possible, and in this state slowly drove on, with her head towards where, according to our reckoning, Vera Cruz

should lie, the offing of which it was our plan to make about daybreak. The danger we wished to avoid was arriving there before the light had come to point out the perils of the approach. The rain poured down in torrents, the night was pitch dark, and battling with the fierce wind was no pleasant occupation. As there was nothing to be done in the working of the vessel, Captain Vrunter ensconced himself in the cabin, where, from the rolling of the ship, sleep was quite impossible. I remained on deck all night; and the captain made his appearance, at intervals, in a curious compound of costume; a striking feature in which was an immense blue worsted stocking, the work of some thrifty German housewife, which was pulled over the captain's head and did duty as a nightcap. Before morning the wind fell somewhat, although still blowing strongly from the north. When day broke we were not able to descry any signs of the land, from which, according to our reckoning, we could not be far distant. There was a good deal of mist about, which, as we supposed, was the obstacle to our view. We kept on, however, under a little sail; and about five o'clock, as the sun was struggling to put in an appearance through a sky of melancholy wind-swept clouds, we made out with the glass, lying away on the water-line, the low, sandy coast. As the mist cleared off we sighted our old friend Orizaba again, this time in a different position from any of its former appearances. The time had now come for which we had longed and looked forward to. José was already at home, and took the command of the vessel; Captain Vrunter, who had appeared in his usual toilet, going generously forward to give an extra hand where it might be required. Everything was made as snug as possible, and pressing on all sail we stood in for the town, the towers and spires of which were faintly discernible at the side of the sand-hills. As we gradually neared our hoped-for destination, the white convent walls, and red and white domes, which at a distance give such an imposing appearance to Vera Cruz, quickly growing into form, like the figures in a slide shown through a stereoscope, we had the assurance made certain that there were none of the American war-ships in the offing.

Right before us, with the "Mexican eagle" flying over it, was the castle of "San Juan d'Ulloa;" the rock on which the fort is built rising out of the sea about a half-mile in front of the town. To the left we made out the low coast-line of the island "de Sacrificios," behind which, to use a Yankee expression, *we calculated* that the Americans were lying. The wind, as I have said, had evidently expended its rage, and was every hour gradually abating. The atmosphere had been cleared by the rain; and although white, feathery clouds were rapidly streaming across the sky, the general aspect of the morning was by this time bright, every distant object standing clearly and sharply defined. The prospect before us was not an inviting one. Dashing on every side over the many sunken reefs and banks which guard the approach to the port, were the angry waves which the "norther" had raised, and which were not so speedy in

besiding as the wind which had caused them. It required not a little confidence in our pilot to believe that we could pass on our way through the sea of surf-crested waves opening before us, without running on some of the unseen obstacles their lashing betrayed. Every one on board the schooner was on the alert and at his station, as it was imperative that the orders of José, who directed our course, should be executed at the instant they were given. Slowly, but safely, we had approached so near, that with the glass we saw the assemblage of masts peeping over the sand-hills of "Sacrificios," and almost distinguished the people in "San Juan" watching our proceedings, when, besides our navigation difficulties, another cause of anxiety presented itself to us.

A movement took place among the spars gathered behind "Sacrificios," and a vessel was visible standing out from its shelter. After a few minutes' uncertainty, we could have no doubt but that she was one of "Uncle Sam's" men-of-war, and, having divined our purpose, from her course, that she intended interrupting us. She appeared to be a light-armed corvette, and, notwithstanding the danger of the undertaking with such a wind and such a sea, was beating up to the north, in the teeth of the wind, in most gallant style. There was now a new element in our calculations. It was a race between the schooner and the corvette; the schooner to get under the guns of "San Juan," the corvette to cut her off before she reached that haven. In point of distance—although, to arrive at the point both vessels aimed at, the corvette had only three and the schooner nearly five miles to sail—the chances were very equal. The wind was, comparatively speaking, in our favour; the corvette, as a counter-balance, we observed to be much our superior in sailing powers. But the foundation of our hope of escape from this unforeseen and unexpected danger was in the risk the corvette ran in taking her present course, as she was closer inshore, and necessarily had greater difficulties to contend with in steering safely through the shoal water than we had.

I have often been asked what were my feelings at this juncture—now anxiously watching our own course, now the course of the corvette. I have never been afflicted with sea-sickness, but at that time I felt just the sensation that I can fancy is the precursor of this landman's scourge—a sickly sinking at the heart, while my mind ran incessantly on imaginary scenes dependent on the escape or loss of our vessel. I felt a nervous tremor tingling through all the limbs in my body, to give a pull to every sail that was braced tighter; to put out a spar, or do anything to push or help forward the schooner. You must understand my future prospects depended, in a great measure, on the game we were playing. Failure would have left me to bear the responsibility of a rash undertaking for which success could be the only justification.

To take every chance, we bore as much to the northward as we dared. Our relative positions kept very much the same, both schooner and corvette doing their very best. After a few minutes' diversion of my

attention from the corvette to ourselves, I had again taken a look at her, when I saw at a glance that something had taken place on board her. A steady look with the glass showed all. The corvette was no longer making way; her sails were flapping and straining against the masts; and we had evidently no more to fear from *her* pursuit. She was fast on a bank, off which, at the following flood-tide, she was successfully hauled with some slight injury to her hull. Our sailors, when they observed the corvette's mishap, gave a vigorous crow; and then all turned—in my case with a lightened heart—to our several duties. We threaded our way carefully and without accident through the shoal waters, and in a short time, clear of danger, rounded "San Juan," and dropped our anchor on the shore side, looking on to the town, as close under its guns as we could bring up.

I rowed at once to the wharf, which along the whole sea-front was crowded with citizens in every variety of hat—the distinguishing feature in Mexican dress. My first journey, after receiving the surprised congratulations of some of my old friends who were among the assemblage, was to the office of the authorities. As no one could foretell what would be the course of events from hour to hour, I determined to make arrangements for landing the cargo as soon as possible. The Custom-house people, who for a considerable period had not *had* the pleasure of collecting duties or fingering douceurs on a single bale of goods, in gratitude for the haul were most obliging, and disposed to make concessions of a most liberal character in the clearance of the cargo—a very important feature in Mexican business, as all who have traded with that misgoverned country know. The first part of the morning had passed while I was engaged in this direction, when a summons came to me from the Senor "Don Commandant," the military governor of the place. When I was ushered into his presence, after some complimentary phrases on the success of my enterprise, he informed me, to my consternation, that under a flag of truce the officer of the Americans demanded that the vessel which had just run into port should be given up to them. In case of refusal to comply with their demand, they intimated that they should at once proceed to employ forcible means of persuasion. There were two feelings contending within the mind of the "Commandant." On the one side it went against his pride to abandon without a struggle a supply which was so welcome to, and so needed by, his country. On the other hand, he was well aware that the defences on which every available hand was busied, and which afterwards did good service against the Americans when they did take possession of the town, were not as yet in a position in which it was desirable that they should undergo the fiery test of an immediate attack. To gain time for deliberation, he sent back the flag of truce to inquire how long would be allowed in which to come to a decision. The braggadocio answer was speedily brought back, that if the schooner were not turned over to him before nine o'clock of the following morning, the American

Commander would save all trouble by fetching the vessel himself. Any steps considered necessary for the furtherance of this object would be taken the responsibility and risk of the Mexican "Commandant." Before this message was returned I had a scheme in my head; and this reply was all that I wanted. The schooner was moved more to the northward and under the guns of "San Juan," as if for her protection. The Americans, despising the whole of the fortifications, took no notice of this movement by which the vessel was hidden from their view.

It was noon by this time, and there was no time to be lost. All through the heat of the day we worked, pressing into our service every flat-bottomed boat and every porter in the city, as well as many other volunteer labourers whose patriotism urged them on their task. At no time of my life have I worked so hard as on that afternoon. When night came on we were still toiling—and toiling, too, in the dark; for I would allow no light to be used, for fear of attracting the notice of the Americans. Every man seemed to take a personal interest in the labour; and half an hour before midnight the thing was accomplished, and the last bale and the last case were out of the schooner's hold, safe on land, leaving her again lightly sitting on the water. José, who, in consequence of his share in the morning's exploit, took rank as a hero among his people, found a pilot willing and able to take out the *Doctor*. Some fresh water was all the supply the schooner needed, as, from our not knowing how long we stay outside the harbour might have been, she was well found in stores, plenty of which remained. After a tarry embrace of farewell from Captain Hunter, who was unusually elated and continually asseverating professions of his readiness to accept cargo under me at any future time, the schooner's anchor was gently slipped, as we feared lest the sound in the still night air of the chain rolling over the capstan might alarm the Yankees; and with all lights doused, and a gentle wind blowing now quite off shore, the *Doctor P. Ziegel* stole noiselessly out to sea on her return voyage.

In the morning, when the Americans found the bird flown, against which contingency they had taken no precaution, there was a commotion. To be outwitted is always felt to be an especial reproach to one of their nation; and in this case it was attended with the loss of a prize rich enough to have recompensed them in some measure for their long and tedious watch. At first they made some bluster of laying the place in ashes, and inflicting their dreadful punishments; all of which ended, as I had anticipated—apply not literally, but metaphorically,—in smoke. As speedily as possible the packages were moved from the stores, in which they had been hastily deposited, up the country, so that when two months later the Americans did occupy Vera Cruz, fortunately none of our goods were found in the stores of that city. My share in this affair resulted in greater gain to me than I had anticipated even in sanguine moments. On a change in the internal affairs of the firm, some months subsequent to this event, I became a junior partner in the House, just when the peace concluded with

the Americans restored business to its accustomed channels. As a consequence, it was not long before I travelled down to the coast, for the purpose of meeting a certain young lady who, under due escort, had journeyed from England;—the sentimental reader can guess her name! On this occasion I had the pleasure of making acquaintance with a charming young personage, who was introduced to me by the happy man himself, in the person of José, as his betrothed. Afterwards I was able to give him many a turn in his business.

And now you know all about my first and last blockade running expedition.

LOVE.

I AM bound by her silken hair,
 I am captive for evermore!
 Yet my fetters I proudly bear,
 For their burthen is sweet though sore:
 Like a slave, I kneel on the earth,
 Like a queen, she sits above;
 But I worship the noble birth
 That has shut me out from Love!
 Though she may never be mine,
 Yet my heart at her feet I lay,
 Nor seek to pilfer the shrine
 At which I silently pray.
 Her changeless heaven broods over
 My life, and no hope I see;
 But I love her, I love her, I love her!—
 That is enough for me!

NEWTON NEVILLE.

WANDERINGS BY NIGHT

BY AN OLD BUSHRANGER.

There are but few amongst us who possess such powers of concentration to be able to think independently of the conditions which surround us, to avoid the influences which by some mysterious agency act upon our minds. Thus almost every person feels at times that he is insensibly led some particular line of thought, or even if his mind be engrossed by any particular class of ideas, these will undoubtedly take a tone from the quality, the time, and the surroundings that meet the eye or ear.

There are, however, some few people whose mentality is of such a peculiar class, that they will feel and think (if think they ever do) exactly the same threadbare manner, whether they be placed amidst scenes of one description, or amongst those of a directly opposite nature. Their thoughts would be but slightly different, whether they were compelled to pass three hours alone, about mid-day, in the midst of Cheapside, or whether during the same length of time they stood near "the sad sea wave," when each ripple gave a multiplied reflection of the silvery moon.

Being troubled with a mind somewhat easily impressed by surrounding conditions, we have frequently sought for those which produced upon the most singular effects, and we very shortly discovered that night was the time when we were most successful in our endeavours; and, in spite of obtaining a character for eccentricity, we frequently selected that period for rambles amidst the glades of a forest, or upon the sandy beach near the sea-shore, these two surroundings having been found particularly fruitful in supplying that novelty for which we were in search.

Whilst thus given to rambling by night merely for the sake of amusement, a sort of habit for nocturnal exercise was engendered; and hence, if there was the least occasion or excuse for it, a long walk by night was undertaken without the slightest hesitation. During several years, and when in various countries, some curious adventures have befallen us whilst thus rambling or journeying by night, and the principal object in penning these lines is to relate some of these events, and thus to endeavour to amuse the reader during a few minutes.

It was during the year 1846 that I was staying for a few months at a retired village in Sussex, near which there was a very large extent of common land. Several fir plantations stood upon this common, and afforded shelter to a great many pheasants, which, with other game, were very plentiful in the neighbourhood. Almost as a natural result, poachers were common in that district, and in spite of all the endeavours made to stop it, a great quantity of game found its way to market, and never yielded one farthing profit to the owner of the shooting.

Unfortunately, I was compelled to attend as a witness against two men who were accused of poaching; and although the prisoners would most

likely have been convicted without my assistance, still my evidence made the matter more certain, and both men were imprisoned.

I was still in the neighbourhood when the term of their imprisonment had expired; and some friends hinted to me that these men were very bad characters, and might possibly seek an opportunity to be revenged upon me. I was not alarmed, however, and did not hesitate to take my nocturnal rambles if so inclined.

One lovely starlight night I wandered out as usual, and walked on to the wild and desolate common that I have already mentioned. I was armed merely with a short stout stick, which, however, was leaded at the end, and was a formidable weapon in the hands of one who knew how to use it.

Having gained a most retired locality, where I was sheltered from the slight wind that blew, I sat down amidst some tall heather, and close beside some scattered pine trees. A road, or rather a beaten track, was within a few yards of me, but so rarely did any travellers select this route, that no interruption was likely to occur, and I believed I might remain quiet for hours, if so disposed, and listen to the tinkle of the sheep-bell, the screech of the owl, the whirr of the night-hawk, and contemplate each twinkling star whilst thought followed thought in strange array.

I was not, however, left long in quiet, for scarcely half an hour had elapsed before I heard footsteps coming along the path which I had myself previously trodden. So calm was the night, that the tread of the travellers must have been heard by me when the people were three hundred yards from me, although, as I could soon distinguish, there was every endeavour made to tread with caution and avoid noise.

The footsteps came nearer and nearer, whilst every now and then they ceased altogether, as though the people, whoever they might be, were listening. Not wishing to be seen or to be disturbed, I crouched down, so that my head was quite concealed by the long furze amidst which I was sitting; yet I could obtain a view nearly all round me, but particularly in the direction of the roadway, as the star-illumined sky was the only background in that direction.

I wondered why any persons could be walking in this lonely locality so late at night, as I did not believe that another individual in the neighbourhood possessed similar tastes to myself. I was interested in discovering who the wanderers might be, and therefore kept my attention directed to the road along which it was evident the strangers were approaching.

I soon obtained a glimpse of the people, as they stood out in relief against the sky, and I saw that there were two men, with the usual countrymen's hats on. They were walking very slowly, and every now and then stopped, and, after half a minute's silence, spoke in low tones.

Presently they came within ten paces of me, and again stood still. I did not move hand or limb, but listened attentively, being now under

the impression that the men, whoever they might be, were plotting some mischief, and I suspected they were poachers.

After standing quietly for several seconds, one of the men spoke in a low tone, and said,—

“There bea’n’t a sound as I can ’ear; think ye he’ll come this way?”

“I be sure o’ that, Bob,” replied the other, “’cause I heer’d Master Edwards, at the ‘Lion,’ tell Jim that he was a-coming in to-night, nigh by eleven o’clock.”

“Then we’ll wait for him here,” remarked the first speaker; to which proposition the second agreed. The two men then moved out of the pathway, and by the slight noise they made I knew that they had stationed themselves among the fir trees on the opposite side of the pathway to that in which I was crouching. They were now too far distant to permit me to hear their remarks, although I could occasionally distinguish the sound of their voices.

I now began to speculate upon the object which had led these men to conceal themselves in this singular manner. I was merely aware that they were anxious to meet some man who was expected along the road, but whether this was to be a friendly meeting or the reverse I could not guess. That some mischief was brewing I felt tolerably certain, but could decide upon nothing more. At first I fancied that these men might be the poachers who I had aided to convict, and that they were out in search of me, probably to take their revenge; but the remark I had overheard about “Master Edwards,” who was the landlord of the “Lion,” induced me to think that a meeting was expected with some other person, probably some man who was to dispose of game that had been poached. I, however, decided to remain quiet, and see the adventure to the end.

Fully a quarter of an hour elapsed without any noise being heard by me. I had to change my position slightly, so as to ease my arm on which I was resting, but I made no noise in doing this, and therefore the two men opposite could not have heard me; but at the end of the time mentioned, there came the sound of footsteps from the same direction as that from which the two men had come. As the person who was approaching came nearer and nearer, I noticed that there was the same caution used as had been before practised, the man stopping occasionally, as though to listen.

When the two men heard the person coming towards them, they moved cautiously from the fir trees, and crept close to the road. I was now most attentive, for I could not tell what black crime might not be attempted on this wild common. Concealed as I was, however, I seemed to possess the power of either stopping some act, or at least of alarming the plotters, if I could do nothing else, for I was sufficiently skilled in woodcraft to be able to find my way through a forest even by night; and if pursued by two or three men, I believed I could evade them by practising certain arts with which I was acquainted. Besides, being armed with such a cudgel

as mine, I did not fear to encounter at least two country bumpkins. I therefore waited patiently, feeling myself quite master of the occasion.

The stranger who was now approaching had reached within about fifty paces of the two concealed men, when he gave a low whistle. I instantly heard the latter say, "It's Jim," and one of them responded with a similar whistle. The stranger immediately came to the two men, and said,—

"All right; he'll be here in ten minutes; but he's got his gun."

"That ain't no matter, if you does as I told yer; he'll not use it in a hurry, and you can hug him from behind, whilst Joe and I close with him in front,—only mind you come up to him quietly."

Some few words more passed, during which I became fully aware of the iniquitous plot that was about to be put into execution.

Two of the three men near me were those who had lately been convicted of poaching, and the man who was expected along the path was a steady, well-conducted gamekeeper, who had a wife and three or four children; he was esteemed by all the people in the neighbourhood, with the exception of some of the worst characters, who it was well known were bent upon revenging themselves for fines and imprisonment to which Crofts (so the keeper was named) had been instrumental in bringing them.

I determined, therefore, to wait my opportunity, and to see whether I could not turn the tables upon these skulking rascals, and save Crofts from the thrashing which I believed these men meditated to bestow upon their supposed persecutor. I did not then imagine that the poachers had determined to commit murder, if possible, and thus to rid themselves of Crofts—But I must not anticipate.

Two of the men—those who had first come on the scene—now sat down by the roadside, whilst the third moved backwards and crawled amongst the heather, so as to be completely concealed. Every now and then they spoke in low tones, and I could hear an oath muttered occasionally; but so fearful was I that any movement of mine might reveal my presence, and thus spoil *my* counterplot, that I feared to move my head, lest I might attract the attention of the poachers.

After about ten minutes, footsteps were distinctly audible, the cause of the sounds coming rapidly nearer. A man was evidently walking quickly, and was following the path which led past the ambushed men; not a movement was now made by those who were crouching on the path, and the stranger strode boldly forward until within about ten paces of the two men: he had then left the single concealed man behind him, and was thus between his enemies, having two in front and one behind.

At this instant one of the men in front stood up, and said, "Hullo, who are you?"

"Who am I?" replied the keeper; "why, I'm Crofts. And who are you?"

"Why, doan't ye know me?" said the other; "leastways ye ought to, fur I've some'ut to say to you."

"Oh, you're Banks; I know now," said Crofts; "and the less you've to say to me the better, unless you intend to give up your bad habits, and take to working honestly, as you ought to do."

"Working honestly!" said Banks, who burst out into a loud laugh, and seemed to be so tickled with the joke, that he danced about in the furze, making, as he did so, a great noise.

At this instant I saw a crouching figure coming up behind Crofts, whose attention seemed fully taken up with the man in front of him; and before he was aware of his danger he was seized by the neck from behind, and was pulled suddenly backwards, whilst the two men rushed on him from in front.

The proceeding was well executed, for the three men were upon him before he had time to use his gun or defend himself, although he was a powerful, active man. I heard one of the three say, "You knows me now, doan't yer? You'll never give evidence agen me again, I'll take care."

I waited for nothing further, but moved quickly, yet quietly up to the group. There was no mistaking friends for foes, for one man was held on the ground by two others, whilst a third seemed to be occupied about the neck of the keeper.

Just as I, unseen, joined the group, the man on the ground ceased struggling, and in a voice of horror said, "You ain't going to murder me!"

"Won't I though?" replied the other, "but I will."

These words were scarcely out of his mouth before my leaded stick descended with a crash upon his bare head, and he rolled over beside the keeper. A second blow was given to the man who had crept on Crofts from behind, and he released his hold and staggered backwards, at the same instant that the keeper, finding himself free, jumped to his feet with his gun again in his hands.

The man whom I had at first struck did not move, but the other two scrambled away over the furze. I then asked Crofts if he were hurt; and he said, "Yes, in the shoulder," which, upon feeling, I found was wet, evidently from blood. Tying my handkerchief tightly round his shoulder under the arm, I twisted my stick round and round until the handkerchief was very tight; then taking his gun, I helped the keeper back to the village, which I understood he had just left.

Here this adventure ended, but I may add that Crofts had been stabbed in the shoulder; and he told me that one of the poachers was untying his neckerchief, and had a knife in his hand; and this caused him to think that the man, having stabbed him, really meant to cut his throat.

Upon a search being made on the common, none of the men could be found, nor was either of them ever heard of again in the village. I believe, however, from what I heard, that they subsequently became known at the

police courts in London, and eventually found their way to the other hemisphere.

Some years after this nocturnal adventure, I happened to be staying for a few months at Southsea, and was returning from Gosport to the Portsmouth side of the harbour. It was on a Sunday evening, and I had obtained permission to pass through the Block-house Fort, as by that means I saved myself a considerable walk. It was a fine evening,—dark, but clear; and having ordered a boatman to wait for me on the Gosport side, I was soon pulled across the narrow channel, and stepped on to the shore, not far from the Quebec Hotel.

The tide was down, and there was consequently several yards of beach between the regular dry land and the water; over this I walked slowly, almost regretting to lose the sound of the rippling on the beach, and at length I stopped and leant against the side of a boat. Suddenly I became conscious of a sound close to me, which seemed like sobbing, but I could not at first be certain. At length I had no doubt that there was a person, who I believed to be a woman, crying on the beach, close to the opposite side of the boat.

I waited a few seconds in order to hear more, and thus to judge in what way to act, when the woman—for woman it was—arose from a crouching position, walked quickly down the beach, and then rushed into the water.

Being encumbered with a heavy boat-cloak, it took me a few seconds to unrobe sufficiently to take to the water; but fortunately the depth increased very gradually and slowly, and the woman was not nearly out of her depth when I caught hold of her dress, and pulled her inshore. She tried at first to escape and again to take to the water, but thinking it justifiable to use a little force, I held her firmly, whilst I tried to persuade her to hear reason, and to tell me why she thus acted.

All the information I could obtain was, “that she had been cruelly used; that her husband would not let her live with him; and that I ought not to prevent her putting an end to her sorrows.” Portsmouth Point is not the best locality in which to find ladies with the most tender feelings or refined sentiment, and I soon found myself quite unable to influence the type of mind with which I had thus singularly been brought into contact.

Her wet clothes, however, seemed to have an effect, for the woman at length said she would go to her husband; and getting up, she walked slowly along the beach, and turned into an alley near it.

I followed at a short distance, with the intention of informing the persons where she went, of her attempt at suicide, and thus hoped to prevent a repetition on the part of the woman, at least on that evening.

After leading me through a most cut-throat-looking neighbourhood she turned into the passage of a house, and cautiously opened a door. No sooner, however, did she become visible to some person inside, than I heard

an oath; the woman turned and ran, followed by a man who said, "Go and drown yourself, you ——."

No sooner had the woman passed me than I jumped forward to prevent the man from following her, and thus narrowly escaped being run against by the man, who, upon seeing me, stopped, and turning, entered the passage and opened the door. I followed him quickly, and soon found myself in a room dimly lighted, and occupied by about two dozen of the most ruffianly-looking villains I ever set eyes on. There was a dimness in the chamber, caused as much by the fumes of tobacco as by the want of more candles or lamps, but still I could distinguish the style of men who were there.

When I entered, some four or five men jumped up, as though surprised; and one loudly asked, "Who are you? and what do you want here?" I saw that I was an unwelcome, and probably an unlicensed visitor, by finding the door closed behind me. I felt a bold face was the best friend, so in a voice of authority I called for the landlord.

An unshaved, dirty-looking ruffian came forward, and said, "Here I am; what now?" I then told him about the woman, and said that if anything happened to her I should hold him responsible, as the man who had driven her to attempt suicide was then in the room, and must be known to him. Having spoken for some time, so as to appear perfectly at home, I pointed to the door. The man hesitated a minute, as though unwilling to let me out, but after a word or two with another man he opened the door amidst a dead silence, and I quitted this den of thieves or smugglers.

Upon my way through Portsmouth I called at the police station, and stated the circumstances; the man on duty hinted that the policemen were never very fond of that neighbourhood, and that domestic quarrels were better left alone.

Some few days after this, I saw in the local paper that the body of a female had lately been washed on shore near Southsea Castle, but no person had identified the body. I wondered whether it could be my midnight acquaintance. * * * *

When walking by myself at night I have a great objection to being followed. The sound of footsteps coming behind me usually causes a disagreeable feeling, and I invariably quicken my pace so as to get beyond the sound of any other pedestrian. If any evil-disposed person purposed to attack you, the best point from which to commence operations would of course be from behind. A heavy blow from a stick on the back of the head would probably stun most men; and thus, in addition to the fancy about being followed, there is really some reason why caution should be used in lonely localities when footsteps are heard behind us.

Some time past I happened to be visiting in the New Forest, and having taken tea with a friend who resided about four miles from the

house at which I was staying, I commenced this four-mile journey about ten o'clock on a dark night in autumn.

My road led over a very lonely heath, and through about two miles of forest, the trees on either side of the road being so tall as to make this portion even more dark than the open ground. Occasionally a gust of wind caused the leaves to rattle on the trees, and several to fall pattering on the road. Not a house or cottage existed on the roadside, but all was wild as nature, to be beautiful, ever should be.

About half a mile of the journey through the forest had been accomplished, when I fancied I heard footsteps behind me. These sounded not like the usual heavy tread of a forester, but as though some person were endeavouring to move stealthily. I discovered this fact by suddenly halting when well balanced on one foot; for if a person should be following, this proceeding will always enable him to be heard for at least two or three paces, as he will probably take that number of steps before he discovers that you have stopped.

Soon after I had halted, the stealthy feet behind me ceased to move; and I then knew I was being followed.

I felt rather amused than otherwise when I had ascertained this fact; for I had not anything of value about me, my garments even being old and thorn-torn, and fit only for the depths of the forest. I had an eight-inch stiletto in my pocket, and a trustworthy blackthorn in my hand. Two pocket handkerchiefs and a pair of leather gloves were instantly placed in my wide-awake hat, so as to save my head in case a downward blow should alight on it, and I strode forward, thinking how *vacuus viator cantabit*, &c.

Finding, however, that the footsteps did not gain upon me, I became curious, and felt anxious to discover more about them. Selecting the grassy portion of the road, I walked on it for about forty paces, and so that I made no noise; then again I rattled over the gravelly portion. Once more I selected the grass, and again I was heard tramping on the gravel. Having thus accustomed my pursuer or pursuers to lose the sound of my feet, and again to hear it, I then carefully left the road, and crouched behind some low bushes. I thus expected to puzzle my pursuers, and also to discover their number and appearance.

The rustling of the fallen leaves, and the intense darkness, prevented me from distinctly ascertaining the description of person who had been behind me; all I could hear seemed to indicate that long and slow steps were taken. When I remained quiet behind the tree, I heard my pursuers approach; but when within about thirty paces they stopped, as though by agreement, and for fully half a minute not a sound was heard. Then, however, there was a noise—a deep breath—which revealed the character of my followers. *Four* feet had actually pursued me up the road, and cloven ones, too; but they were those of a cow, which was taking a night walk for its amusement.

Africa was the scene of many nocturnal adventures, one only of which will be here related.

Having occasion to pass from one frontier outpost to another—viz., from Block Drift to Fort Beaufort—during the month of January, the hottest time of the year, it was agreed that the three (of which I was one) should start after sundown, in order to avoid the heat of the day.

The moon was full at the time, and consequently rose soon after the sun had set; and we thus should have nearly as much light during our night journey as often favours us in England during the day.

The journey we expected would occupy us about an hour, as the road was in good order, and our horses fresh. The country through which we should ride was undulating, and covered in many places with stunted bush, composed principally of mimosa bushes; whilst in some parts open plains extended on both sides of the road, and reached to a considerable distance from it.

At the date to which I refer a war was impending with the Gaika tribes, whose treachery the colonists had frequently experienced; and it was not considered prudent to venture more than a mile from any outpost, unless in numbers and well armed: for these savages would not hesitate for the declaration of war, in order to waylay or slaughter a white man. Thus, although the journey referred to must be undertaken with some risk, yet, from the road lying within the colony, and from the journey being likely to occupy so short a time, it was not considered necessary to make our wills before starting.

The first three or four miles of the distance were passed over without anything being seen to attract our attention, when upon ascending a slight rise, which brought us to an open plain, we observed a mass of dark-looking objects coming rapidly towards us. Halting to obtain a better view, we heard the trampling of horses' hoofs; and soon, by the aid of the brilliant moonlight, discovered that over a hundred Kaffirs were galloping frantically along the road, and were within a few hundred yards of us. So to turn and ride for our lives seemed the only chance; but a moment's consideration showed that we should be overtaken, or easily cut off in our retreat: we therefore waited the shock.

The mounted savages, with their blankets streaming out behind them, their guns or assegies held high in the air, and shouting to each other in their strange language, dashed forward until within fifty yards, when they diverged right and left, and passed us without attacking us. Shouts of "*Hambani gathlê*" (go on well), and "*Erwe wetu*" (yes, friend), were uttered as the wild troop flew past; and then but a long and dense cloud of dust was visible, whilst the sound of the retreating hoofs was just audible.

— Fortunately for us, Kaffirland was not then quite ready for war.

DEATH ON THE HIGH SEAS.

THAT unconquerable thirst for adventure which ever urges men to relinquish the thing in their immediate possession for the shining will-o'-the-wisps which dot the blank vista of the future, has, from time immemorial, been the making of both heroes and fools. The *carpe diem* is an Horatian maxim which even hare-eyed Horace himself did not always follow. Nowadays, adventurous honesty tempts the merchant, *indocius pauperiem pati*, to risk his all in speculations which bring his wife to grief, convert his daughters into milliners, and cut short the career of his sons at college. Adventurous dishonesty drives the defaulting bank director, *pour encourager les autres*, to Australia or the hulks. Adventurous asininity causes my lord Fitznoodle to squander his patrimony on the turf, and persuades his friend Fritzdoodle, primed with Clicquot's superb, to walk in a zigzag fashion towards Whitecross Street. There is no cataloguing the dance of follies into which this thirst for adventure may lead even rational men and women; from debt to death, from speculation to swindling, from matrimony to madness. It is, on the other hand, a thirst which frequently culminates in heroism; and of all adventurous heroes, commend us to the British sailor, whether we see him in a common blue jacket or in the cocked hat of an admiral. From figure-head to stern, to adopt a phrase nautical, Jack is a noble fellow. He is as agile as a porpoise afloat, though as clumsy as a porpoise on land. Wherever we see him, we catch a salt-sea flavour of good humour, and a rattling spontaneous harmony such as fills Dibdin's ballads. Braving all weathers, facing all dangers, he alights on his legs under all circumstances with uncompromising faith in his own mettle and the beneficence of Providence. On the whole, his life seems an enviable one; and no wonder that schoolboys, smarting under the birch, should run off to sea in the full expectation of finding on the vasty deep plenty of fun, lots of money, and freedom from the rod.

The above very trite remarks should be supplemented by the comment that, among the men who have resigned a comfortable land life for a sea life of chance and peril, numberless have been the Englishmen zealous for their country's honour, and eager to do their duty—with whom, in fact, an adventurous career has been the accidental development of innate patriotism. Monarch of all such men was Raleigh. Most abundant of all ages in such men was the age in which Raleigh lived.

In the sixteenth century, the whole adventurous spirit of England seemed, by a complicity of circumstances, to be turned towards the ocean. There were the Spaniards devastating the South American coast, and, vampire-like, sucking the blood of the unfortunate natives of Peru; there was the Protestant faith to be defended against the remorseless scourgers of the seas; and, over and above all, there was the El Dorado of explorers'

dreams, the North-west Passage to be discovered. Between fighting and exploring, there was plenty of work for bold men to do—particularly in the days of good, or bad (perhaps the most appropriate of all three adjectives would be “sad”), Queen Bess.

Elizabeth, rooted in whose powerful mind was strong attachment to the country and people she governed, and who was ever desirous of national aggrandizement, fostered every scheme which promised to further her ends; and the shrewd eye of Walsingham, when he was the head of affairs, detected at once the possibility or impossibility of success in an adventure, using or refusing to use his influence with the Queen accordingly. Little restriction, however, was placed upon a man who could afford to fit out a vessel for himself. Such a man might therewith war with the Spaniards, take prisoners, and sink or capture as many of the enemy's ships as he could, with the certainty of being rewarded with the spoils of war. The more damage such an adventurer did, the more bold and daring his exploits, the better he was paid; and it must be confessed that he was worthy of his hire. Under such a system, it is not astonishing that there were blackguards in the ranks,—selfish, unpatriotic cruisers; fellows who liked the Spanish gold more than the honour of England; dangerous ruffians, very little better than ruffians openly piratical. But even these blackguards helped the good end. They assisted the true men, their more conscientious brethren, in frustrating to some extent, both on the seas and in Peru, the barbarous cruelties of Spain. How barbarous, how cruel, the Spaniards were, it is difficult to believe in so quiet an age as the present. It was on account of the atrocities perpetrated on the slaves working in the Peruvian silver and gold mines that Raleigh called upon England, saying:—

“The great Judge of the world hath heard the sighs, groans, and lamentations, hath seen the tears and blood, of so many millions of innocent men, women, and children, afflicted, robbed, reviled, branded with hot irons, roasted, dismembered, mangled, stabbed, whipped, racked, scalded with hot oil, put to the strappado, ripped alive, beheaded in sport, drowned, dashed against the rocks, famished, devoured by mastiffs, burned, and by infinite atrocities consumed. . . . Scourge and plague that cursed nation, and take the yoke of servitude from that distressed people, as free by nature as any Christian.”

Here was a call which adventurous spirits had not the self-denial to resist, and which bold patriots thought themselves bound in honour to obey. There were Spanish hides to be tanned, and Spanish gold to be won. Against any possible profit, the bold spirits had to stake life; but they had the courage to die, and to die bravely. They held, indeed, that Englishmen could not die better than when facing fearful odds, so they obeyed the call; some with a view to lucre, others because they thirsted for personal honour, some for the sake of England. Forth they fared, either to Peru or to live their precarious life on the high seas, where hate

was glaring through the yellow eyes of the Spaniards, and where death ranged from shore to shore like a cloud. They fought and died, either winning or losing in their precarious game of speculation. Many of them, now forgotten, died the deaths of heroes. Among these latter were Richard Grenville, of Bideford, commander of the *Revenge*; one Humfrey Gilbert, of Dartmouth; and John Davies, of Sandwich. The death scenes of these three stout sailors are full of a soft brightness, the issue of duty faithfully performed, and of valour fading into perfect peace.

It was in the midst of the din and tumult of the war with Spain that Sir Richard Grenville appeared prominently, and worked havoc among the craft of the enemy. This daring man of war was distinguished for valour—moral and physical; he was no mere speculative adventurer, but a man full of a high purpose. He had an idea of doing something to aid the great cause of Protestantism and humanity; and his stern will and strong mind never relinquished the object towards which they were directed. Courageous as the British lion rampant, he never turned his back upon a foe. In a very short time he had cruised with a success so invariable as to render him an object of terror to the superstitious foe. It was confidently asserted by the Spaniards that Grenville was a species of Flying Dutchman; and among the Spanish seamen arose a belief that he was in league with Satan, and hence his amazing prowess and numerous victories. His ship played at will-o'-the-wisp with the largest fleets, and lured them into all sorts of trouble, until at length the mere mention of his name was like the bursting of a bomb-shell in the midst of the Spanish navy. The Spaniard hated him heartily—and very naturally; but the English loved him. To them he was a genuine Jack Tar, a true old English gentleman, a popular hero; and, withal, he was a bluff, hearty fellow, who liked his wine,—although the assertion of the enemy's seamen, that he was in the habit of craunching and swallowing the glass after the liquor, is barely to be credited!

It was in the heat of battle, however, that he shone forth in all his glory. The atmosphere of a sea-fight was his natural element. Calm and firm he stood amidst the roar and din, his clear, steady voice pealing above all, now inspiring new courage into his men, and now urging them to some new deed of danger and daring. The end was to come at last.

A little English fleet of some dozen vessels, of various shapes and sizes, and under the command of Lord Thomas Howard, was anchored, in the month of August, 1591, at a short distance below the island of Flores, when it was surprised by a Spanish fleet numbering fifty-three men-of-war. Finding it useless to contend against odds so overwhelming, the English admiral gave the signal to his little body of followers to ship their mornings and speed away. All the vessels appeared to have obeyed the command, save only the *Revenge*, under Sir Richard. Though perfectly cognizant of the danger of disobeying his superior officer, and fully alive to

the terrors of the overwhelming odds fast bearing down upon him, Grenville would not budge until ninety of his men, then lying on shore, were safely conveyed back to the ship. With a vague idea of adopting some new manoeuvre, and cutting his way through the enemy, he positively refused to fly before the Spanish fleet. Death, in his eyes, was preferable to a life tainted with dishonour, and disobedience seemed less heinous than humanity. As soon as the sick men were safely stowed on board, he weighed anchor and sailed out from harbour, slipping past two or three of the enemy's squadron. Soon, however, he became entangled with the *Santa Hilip*, a vessel of 1,500 tons. The engagement commenced fiercely on both sides; but all night Spanish ships swarmed around the little Englishman. For a time the dwarf dealt destruction to the opposing giants. At an early stage of the affray Sir Richard was wounded. He did not leave the deck, however, till a little before midnight, when he had received several shots in his head and body. The surgeon who dressed his wounds was shot dead at his side.

The unequal strife was at length ended. The ammunition of the *venge* was wholly spent. Forty of the men were killed, and the greater number of the others wounded. To crown all, Grenville was lying helpless, powerless, in a dying condition. While lying thus, he besought his men not to shame the glory already won and ignominiously surrender, but to sink the ship, and perish honourably. But life was too precious to the mass. The majority of the crew preferred to yield, and they did so without consulting their commander. They succeeded in making honourable terms, which, to do the Spaniards justice, were faithfully observed. The Spanish admiral, Alonzo de Bacon, ordered Sir Richard to be conveyed on board his vessel. To this the dying man made no objection; they might use his body as they pleased, for, he said, he "esteemed it not." The end of life was fast ebbing. The man who had so often looked death in the face felt the cold anatomy grow nearer and darker. Feeling that the end was near, Sir Richard spoke these words:—

"Here die I, Richard Grenville, with a joyful and quiet mind; for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do that hath fought for his country, Queen, religion, and honour. Whereby my soul most joyfully departeth out of this body, and shall always leave behind it an everlasting fame of a valiant and true soldier, that hath done his duty as he was bound to do."

When he had finished speaking, Grenville died, and was speedily consigned to the keeping of the element on which he had fared so bravely. They said a prayer over the body, and dropped it into the water. Immediately thereafter arose a storm, which scattered death and shipwreck along the coast, and destroyed a great part of the Spanish fleet. The sailors declared that Grenville, for the purpose of taking vengeance for his defeat, had raised the tempest with the assistance of the evil one.

Such was the cloudy last scene of Grenville's life. Turn we now to

another end, less turbulent, but scarcely less heroic,—that of Humfrey Gilbert, to whom, as a navigator and discoverer, England is yet in debt.

About two miles above the port of Dartmouth was situated the manor-house of Greenaway, within a stone's throw of which ships of considerable burthen might ride in safety. Here dwelt Humfrey and Adrian Gilbert, with their cousin, Walter Raleigh. Occasionally the party was augmented by one John Davis, who came from the neighbouring parish of Sandwich. These happy youths indulged in all sorts of nautical sports, borrowing from each other qualities of mind which remained with them till death. It was at this house of Greenaway, be it noted, that Raleigh is said to have indulged in the first pipe of tobacco ever smoked in England.

Humfrey Gilbert, who was afterwards knighted by the Queen, early exhibited an original mind and a talent for the scientific department of navigation. He began to employ himself in correcting the naval sea-cards, the fault of which, he held, lay in making "the degree of longitude in every latitude of one common bigness." He also turned his attention to the construction of nautical instruments, and to the study of the formation of the globe. In the course of his researches he became firmly convinced of the existence of a north-west passage, and vigorously devoted himself to the investigation of the probable advantages to be derived by his country from the discovery of this route. He spent much time in drawing up plans and charts, and, like the many others who have yielded up their lives to this problem, gave his whole energies to the study. The idea strengthened with its growth; Night and day his thoughts were occupied with prospects of the immense streams of commerce which the discovery might open to England. His determination to work out the idea daily became more fixed and resolute.

The naturally forcible character of Humfrey Gilbert was strikingly evinced by the fearless manner in which he put forth his views upon his pet subject. Stoutly, yet modestly, he proclaimed his convictions.

Walsingham, ever watchful, soon found out the young navigator; and by his influence Gilbert was brought before the Queen and the Privy Council, who accorded a patient hearing to what seemed, to many, the wildest speculations. All agreed, however, that the suggestions placed before them had a strong flavour of common sense—a quality possessed by Humfrey in no ordinary degree. At a time when the public mind was in a ferment of desire for the discovery of the conjectured passage, it was not wonderful that the councillors of Elizabeth should be inclined to listen to arguments plausibly advanced and scientifically supported. The Queen herself felt drawn towards the brave youth, who stood before her glowing with the excitement of his position, and trembling with fear lest his auditors should deride his golden promises. The concluding words of Gilbert's memorial fully express the ardour of the feelings which called it forth:—

"Never, therefore, mislike with me for taking in hand any laudable and

onest enterprise; for if, through pleasure or idleness, we purchased them, the pleasure vanisheth, but the shame abideth for ever. Give me leave, therefore, without offence, always to live and die in this mind—that he is not worthy to live at all that, for fear or danger of death, shunneth his country's service and his own honour, seeing that death is inevitable and the fame of virtue immortal, wherefore in this behalf *mutare vel timere verum.*"

These words were worthy of the respect they won from a queen.

But much as his auditors would have liked to reap the promised harvest, they were loth to risk the sowing of the seed. After some deliberation they refused to assist the project or make any advances. Gilbert, however, was not to be daunted. He had too firm a belief in the possibility of success in this hazardous enterprise to renounce it at the first cold puff of doubt and disapproval. At his own personal expense he undertook two voyages, both of which completely failed.

Still undaunted, in the month of June, 1583, he set sail from the port of Dartmouth. Besides her Majesty's commission to discover and take possession from latitude 45° to 50° north, he took with him a jewel given to him by the Queen as a parting tribute of regard. Previous to his departure, indeed, Elizabeth ordered Raleigh to have Gilbert's portrait taken for her; although, in all probability, she might have asked for his head had he returned. Perhaps it was as well for Sir Humfrey Gilbert that he never did return, although the conjecture that he needlessly risked and lost his life in dread of a third failure was utterly without foundation.

The five vessels which composed his fleet were ill fitted for the dangerous service in which they were to be employed. These were the *Raleigh*, 200 tons burthen; the *Delight*, 120 tons; the *Golden Hinde*, 10 tons; the *Swallow*, 40 tons; and the *Squirrel* (the ship in which Sir Humfrey chiefly sailed), 10 tons. The first of these, the *Raleigh*, was abandoned off the Land's End. The little band of explorers reached St. John's in safety, and there they left a second vessel, the *Swallow*. Then, battling with wind and tempest, and struggling against all the difficulties of navigating an uncharted ocean, Sir Humfrey spent the remainder of the summer in examining the American coast to the southward. Numerous notes, made by him during the voyage, and which would have been of incalculable value to future navigators of the same seas, were unfortunately all lost in the *Delight*, which went down in a storm towards the end of August.

Thus, without any very decided result, passed the summer and a great part of the autumn. Then came weariness and disappointment. At the beginning of September, when the rapid approach of winter made it imperatively necessary to abandon the expedition for that year, Sir Humfrey turned the prow of his tiny craft homewards. Though sad in heart at hope deferred, he was now more certain than ever of ultimate success, and

he talked with confidence of the expedition he was determined to organize for the ensuing spring ; but this was not to be.

Gilbert still remained on board the *Squirrel*. The master, mate, and crew of the *Golden Hinde* besought him to join them, as theirs was the most seaworthy vessel. His answer was characteristic : " I will not," he said, " forsake my little company going homewards, with whom I have passed so many storms and perils ;" and not all the rough weather with which the ships had to contend, not all the terrible dangers of the sea they were navigating, altered his purpose. Death was on the high seas doing his wild work. The nearer the ships approached to England, the more frequent became the storms. On Monday, the 9th September, the *Squirrel* was in advance of the *Golden Hinde*. The tempest raged so violently, that those in the latter vessel imagined, on more than one occasion, that their companion had been cast away. Presently, on coming close up to the *Squirrel*, they saw Sir Humfrey sitting abaft, *reading* ; and when they were within hearing, they heard him call out, in a cheery voice, " We are as near to heaven by sea as by land." Louder roared the wind ; higher, stronger rose the waves ; and the night drew on darkly. About midnight the watchers in the *Golden Hinde* saw the lights of the *Squirrel* suddenly disappear. The cry of " Lost " swelled the din of the tempest. Next morning not a vestige of the little bark was visible. She had gone down in the night, and among the rest had perished Sir Humfrey Gilbert.

Thus died Humfrey Gilbert, sitting in his cockle-shell of a boat, in the midst of a rampant ocean, cheering and consoling his little company with good words, calmly reading a book—and who shall doubt what book that was ?—for his own consolation, and learning therein that " we are as near to heaven by sea as by land."

Readers of the foregoing will remember having seen, in a corner of the map of the world, the words "*Davis's Straits* ;" but few know much of the man whose name is thus commemorated. That man was the same John Davis who has been alluded to as the occasional companion of the light-hearted youths of Greenaway.

As a quiet, modest boy, he entered enthusiastically into all the wild speculations of Humfrey Gilbert, and all the golden dreams of Walter Raleigh. From a genial, warm-hearted youth, he emerged into a manhood morally and physically strong, but withal kind and gentle. He was a man to whom the heart yearned, and one well worthy of the affection which all who came in contact with him at once accorded. When he came to form his ship's companies, men and boys gladly left home and kindred to link themselves to his doubtful fortunes ; and mothers and wives prayed for John Davis, as they bade adieu to sons and husbands whom they were perhaps destined never to see again.

It was in 1585—two years after the death of Humfrey Gilbert—that John Davis sailed from Dartmouth on an expedition to the Polar Sea. This voyage was followed by two others to the same region. The result,

notwithstanding the disadvantages of ill-equipped vessels, was satisfactory in the extreme. He subsequently explored portions of the South Seas, and made many voyages north-west. While on one of the latter expeditions he landed at Gilbert's Sound.

At Gilbert's Sound he was much annoyed and harassed by the natives; but no better proof of the man's gentle and humane nature could be afforded than this tolerance under such circumstances. He thought it "very hard in so short a time to make them (the savages) know their evils," and so "willed that they should not be hardly used."

Leaving Gilbert's Sound, he proceeded on his voyage north-west, sailing four degrees beyond the farthest point then known. It was on his return voyage by the American coast that he discovered the bay now known as Hudson's Bay,—a discovery of infinite value to contemporary commerce, and which brought Davis under the immediate notice of Walsingham and Burleigh. These statesmen, however, were now advanced in years, and had forgotten the old energetic policy which was ever ready to further schemes which promised good to the country. Elizabeth herself had lost much of that vigour which had characterized her during the early years of her reign. So John Davis, notwithstanding his valuable service to the State, was suffered to go unrewarded. His existence was soon after little remembered, if not entirely forgotten.

Years passed, and the name of John Davis, the discoverer, was scarcely heard among men. So completely was he ignored, that his existence seemed known only to his intimate friends. That he was working hard, however, there could not be a doubt. The nature of the man would not permit him to remain idle. Now and then the cloud which enveloped him would be drawn aside, and a glimpse was caught of him trading in the Eastern Seas. But the particulars of his strange career were never known. In the year 1604 he appeared again before the world, as if to show the end of his disappointed life. We think with a glow of satisfaction, and a thrill of natural pride, of the Englishman who falls on deck or green field, fighting for his country; but we shudder when we read of a brave life sacrificed by the cowardly hand of the assassin. Davis did not die in fair fight,—he was barbarously murdered.

In the year just mentioned, while conveying Sir Edward Mitchell home to India, Davis fell in with a Japanese crew, whose vessel had been burnt, and who were sailing in an old junk without provision. Though suspecting them to be mere pirates, the English captain, whose heart was as compassionate as brave, was too good-natured to leave them to their fate. He took them on board his own vessel, and treated them with kindness and attention. Night came. The Japanese crew fell upon their preserver, and robbed him of life.

So ended three lives, surprised by death on the high seas. The names of these heroic gentlemen, though now almost forgotten, deserve to be embalmed in the memory of the people in whose service the owners lived and died.

AS FAR AS THE RIGI.

WOULD that I, Scriblerus, were paid but a penny for every dozen times "Now we're off!" is said by Great British and Irish travellers! For, computing roughly, Bradshaw contains one hundred and seventy pages, each chronicling twenty-five week-day trains; allowing four carriages to a train, and one essayist at conversation to a carriage, an (at present only dreamed of) income of eighteen hundred pounds would be pocketed. In the fulness of their hearts, joyous holiday tourists make great capital out of this phrase, and the agreeable emotions its repetition excites. Now we're off! having closed the street door at home. No, *now* we're off! as the train alternately glides and bumps out of the London Bridge station. Now we really *are* off, since the *Prince Somebody* is slowly forging ahead out of Folkestone Harbour, and we are leaving England. Woe is most of us! the true "Now we're off!" this—off life-giving Mother Earth—off our feed—off our legs.

Clank. Clank: clank; clank, clank clank—from rest the paddles gradually attain full speed. Firm in an antique faith that there the vessel's motion is scarce felt, we stand amidships, and brave the engines' smell. At the first plunge of the bows——

To the eye of that douanier always at the end of Boulogne pier, frowning, and with folded arms (according to French military regulations), we stand erect, nay, in a somewhat defiant posture, on the sopping deck of the *Prince Somebody*; whose paddles send the wavelets glibly up the black and slimy piles, as the piles in turn re-echo the paddle's clank, but now quite musically. Yet we know that we are hollow deceptions, with highly stimulated salivary glands, and cheeks so scarred and bound by scarce dried rigid seams of involuntary tears, that terrible grimaces secretly indulged in—the simultaneous opening of jaws, and rolling and squinting of eyes—cannot relax them.

"İçi, Pe-urr, içi! Pe-urr! Depashyvoo, man alive, depashyvoo! Prenny hold of this hawser, vite. Handsomely. Assy, assy."

Yes, yes, good Peter; quickly and deftly do our honest A. B.'s bidding. Let us get moored to the Port with all convenient haste, and once again set foot on shore, swearing roundly the oath of the Queen's Sovereignty (of the seas)——

"We do from our hearts abhor and detest, as needless and heretical, that damnable Doctrine and Position that Persons crossing the Channel should suffer sea-sickness."

Why, at all events, for such short distances need there be any more sea-sickness? Why, because a vessel must necessarily pitch and toss in rough weather, should its wretched passengers be compelled to do likewise, and suffer the grewsome consequences? Lamps, barometers, and the compass maintain a constant position on shipboard in the roughest

weather; why, then, should not pleasure-traffic steamers have chairs hung in gimbals to let human beings enjoy the same privilege? Will directors deign to adopt a merciful policy? Merciful men do good to themselves. It stands to reason that at an extra fare such chairs would be highly remunerative. Mossoo alone, to escape the evil of the sea, would make them pay—even frugal Mossoo, who loves his money so well.

To make it only tolerable, a night railway journey like that from Paris to Basle, three hundred and twenty-three miles, in a third-class carriage, wants a greater share of luck in the way of meeting with, and keeping, an empty compartment than can ordinarily be expected; and yet poor travellers must endure it. The only aid to self-preservation is, on the opening of the doors of that haven of safety for foreigners (who, unable to take care of themselves, need and love the restraints of paternal government), but chamber of horrors to Englishmen, the Salle d'Attente, to dart out with your companion, and secure the two platform-side seats of the foremost division of some carriage. A back, freedom from draught, the command of a window, and the power of getting in and out easily are thus obtained. Nothing more can be attempted. Chance rules the rest. It is wise to abandon further hope. For in pour gentlemen and dames the voyagers. First, perhaps, the way is temporarily stopped by some stout citizen in jean clothing, jocular, and bearing a calico cushion, stuffed with chaff;—by that token write him down a fellow-traveller for two hundred miles at least. Then the brave sons of the Army of the East-by-North arrive at the charge pace, and with élan, with a buoyant, soaring, bursting energy, struggle at the doors, and even there in some sort gather the glory and honour that are equally dear with potage to a Frenchman's heart. They ejaculate military oaths, and a superfluity of clear rolling Rs, enough to usefully furnish many an unfortunate would-be exquisite in England for a week. Every man, or boy, of them carries a red cowskin knapsack, having, in addition to its usual contents—ah, my faith, yes!—a marshal's bâton at the bottom, a huge cloak neatly rolled along the top and sides, and a loaf and a tin pannikin strapped at the back. The well-fed English tourist thankfully eyes his own warily contrived seven or eight pounds' pack, and shudders at the awful burden the little warriors have to carry. Anon, the fat mother, with refreshment basket and pappy-fleshed children; her small, plump, helpless servant dragging another refreshment basket and more children. In they scramble: dark blues and light blues, uniforms and blouses, young folks smooth and fleshy like peaches, old ones spare and shrivelled like winter apples. All are excited about nothing. All talk at the top of their voices concerning some utterly trivial circumstance of the moment. They begin by working themselves up into the belief that this really is a matter of vivid personal interest, and end by requesting and requiring all those whom it may not concern, even British subjects travelling on the Continent, to be equally affected. All carry personal effects secured never so slightly. All are eager to look out of the window directly they

have entered the carriage. Not one appears to have the remotest idea of the blessed value of peace and quietness. The start takes place in a Babel continuing animatedly for nigh a score of miles. A dozen pipes are by then alight, and the noise begins to abate. You try to doze. The train surely seems to be moving backwards—a slight blank; forty winks, perhaps, not more. During the next half-hour a soldier's knapsack tumbles off the seat, but an entanglement of legs prevents a further fall. Its owner, sleeping sitting, still leans on it; his head is below the level of the window-sill; from the combined action of belt, shako, epaulettes, military collar, gross neck, and enormous ears, he must presently have a fit. But luckily "the tourist's knife" contains a fleam. You make and unmake "legs" with your companion, and in so doing arouse, thoroughly, him then just beginning to doze, and, partially, his wrath then fast asleep. Your tongue feels like a parrot's, round, hard, and hot. Your bones seem coming through your flesh. In vain amid the huddle of humanity you strive to shift your berth on the cruelly hard seat, and even the gladly welcomed sudden thought of that shocking falsehood so often promulgated—a common kitchen "Windsor" is the most comfortable of chairs—fails to afford relief. How stiflingly hot the carriage is! Boots, already unlaced, bind like vices. You slip them off, and use a knapsack as a footstool—ah! that will never do, for the cold night air cuts in at the bottom of the door like a knife. SnORES are booming at regular intervals, else—ray of bliss!—all is silent. In the dim light everybody seems asleep or at rest but you, who writhe like one of the wicked. And that smart handsome girl, with no perceptible luggage, who you thought had been spending the day in Paris, and was returning but to Rosny-sous-Bois or Nogent-sur-Marne, eight or ten miles, her lace bonnet is off, her hair is inclined to fall down, and really—but perhaps the gloom is deceptive—it looks very much as if she was fast asleep on the bon citoyen's shoulder, and that the bon citoyen's arm had somehow got around her waist—an illustration of one proverbial effect of travelling and misfortune.

"Wake up!"

"Hallo! where are we?"

"Troyes, Troyes; dix minutes d'arrêt!" monotonously cry the porters, as they throw back the low latches and open all the doors. And amid the pleasant firm ring of wheels under testing-hammer blows, you rush to the buffet through the sudden crowd of passengers on the platform of the deserted half-lighted station. "A bowl of soup, a cup of coffee, if you please, Madame," which you know will be so comfortingly warm, yet not so scaldingly hot that you cannot immediately drink it, regardless of manners, by noisy sups from big sensibly-sized spoons.

"Oui, Messieurs; tout de suite."

"And, Madame, half-a-dozen of those admirable rolls of yours, a goodly piece of highly flavoured sausage, and a bottle of ordinary wine to carry away with us; haply we may have no better chance of buying breakfast until Basle be reached, twelve hours hence."

“Oui, Messieurs; avec plaisir.”

“‘Avec plaisir!’ Mark that, companion of the voyage. A female is serving refreshments at a railway-station politely, cheerfully, without a scowl; and at 2.50 a.m.! Clearly one is very far from Eng—”

“En voitures!”

Then once more the hurly-burly on the platform. Then a pleasing sensation compounded of having eaten, and stretched one's legs, and got over a hundred miles of the journey, and of the discovery that night third-class travelling, like very early rising, is not so bad when the first and worst part is over. Lastly, in spite of all difficulties, comes sleep for three or four hours.

Daylight shows a change in the cast of character. Morning pipes are being smoked. A sallow young priest, a fresh arrival, has spread a cotton pocket handkerchief over his knees, and is breakfasting off bread, clasp-knife, and chocolate. When, perhaps, the vines are first seen covering the slopes which run down to the flat lands by La Ferté-sur-Amance, a cup of the humble ordinary wine serves to toast—

“The foaming grape of eastern France.”

Hereabouts, too, a peasant, entering inwards with cargo, will not unlikely tread upon your toes with his naked feet encased in wooden sabots. Is it to-day, yesterday, or to-morrow? Are you in France, Germany, or Switzerland? Are you awake or dreaming? Is the train performing its regular duty, or making the excursion for a freak on a new line that has sprung up for this special occasion? Hardly one of these queries would a traveller answer on oath about the time that the train winds partly round Vesoul, such a whirl has want of sleep produced. But two hours at a Basle hotel, a pleasant loitering at Bridge, Casino, or Pfalz, in view of the bold bend of the Rhine—surely for eyes unaccustomed to gaze upon one, a great *streamy* river is a grand sight—these bring him up to concert pitch again, and make a good night's rest in a bed appear almost too effeminate a luxury.

During supper at the Rigi Kulm Hotel, the British knapsack-tourist casually lets fall that “he made the ascent in two-twenty. Yes; he believes Murray does allow an hour or so longer.” Naturally, it is a point of honour with a mountaineering tyro to start at a bursting pace, and usually the Rigi is a first essay. He soon gets winded, and at the Staffel is quite done up. Yet, with a young Englishman's inborn feeling that everybody is looking at him, he nevertheless spurts up to the Kulm Hotel as if its hundred windows were crowded with gazers to criticize his arrival, and, still carrying his knapsack, he jauntily steps to his bedroom up two stairs at a time, though fain to drop. Even if he does not want wine, he is yet too raw upon the trip to boldly say No to the carteprofferer; so under the encouraging influence of a three-franc bottle of Beaujolais, he may, if tolerably sure of his audience, drop dark hints

concerning his design for ascending the hitherto unconquered Matterhorn—the greasy pole of the Alpine Club.

The “agreeable rattle”—that tea-table darling, and fleshly concomitant to rout cakes and negus—or a jocose curate, is a great man up here. A very slight pun goes a very long way on the Rigi, and the map of the neighbourhood alone provides such excellent material, that “his last” is perpetually running the round of the table, and he is quite the hero of the night. The heroine of the Rigi is not the nice old lady—a venerable grandmother, who, at twenty, never dreamt that she should live to drink tea and actually sleep above the clouds—nor yet the bride, nor even the pretty girl—for all are up there; but the middle-aged spinster sort of female. The bracing breezes of the mountain, the romantic history connected with the Lake of the Four Cantons at its base, and the novelty of the situation, combine to animate her especially. She breathes the air of Liberty; she comes out famously as the Alp rose; and, “*Regina Montis*,” reigns preeminent.

“I do hope we shall have a fine sunrise. Our guide—such a noble fellow, a true Switzer—has made several ascents; he has just been looking at the weather, and says he thinks we shall. Curiously enough, his name is Tell—Walter Tell. I do wish it had been William; he would then be perfect, and so interesting. Still, Fürst, you know, one of the immortal Grütli trio, was named Walter—”

“Excuse my rudeness in interrupting you, Miss Kerlschue, but *Fürst* strikes me as being a most appropriate name for a *guide*, unless, of course, I am *Grutli* deceived.”*

“Ts-ts-ts. Really, Mr. Funnyman, again! I never.”

“Well, I confess I have been staying a day at Wäggis(h), and no doubt that has had some effect upon me.”

“Now I am quite sure you are in the habit of contributing to that humorous periodical, *Punch*. Did you and your friend have a guide? No? [*Assuming a slightly foreign manner and accent*] Ah, you came, then, up by Goldau: s——o! perhaps there is no necessity for one on that route. But we made the ascent from Wäggis, you know; and I assure you there are several very critical places. Indeed, if my mule had not been the best on the mountain, I should nearly have been compelled to dismount once or twice. I strongly advise your taking a guide to-morrow if you think of descending that way; possibly you may be able to hire a return one. You will not entertain the proposition? So! Then I need not ask whether you are members of the famous Alpine Club. I hope you admit lady members. Now I can’t resist telling you that the darling wish of my life is, to belong to the Alpine Club. If I were

* These trifling sample shots, pointed for firing, are very very humbly offered for the acceptance of Rigi jokers. Something also ought to be made out of “grind up” and Horgen; Art, here, not being in the high lands; Uri’s beauty and “lake,” and houri’s beauty and “rouge;”—but the vein of local material is inexhaustible.

elected I am sure I should enter thoroughly into the spirit of the thing, and endeavour to carry out in their integrity what, doubtless, were the founders' intentions. I should immediately turn Augustine, and live, you know, on the Great St. Bernard. How delightful it would be to witness daily proofs of the fidelity of those sagacious dogs; and to sit in the convent oriel (with restoratives at hand), listening for the deep bay of the dear faithful creatures as they tenderly dragged the frozen Savoyard, or the denizen of the Valais, towards the hospitable——But I see my party is retiring; I must say good night. I dare say we shall meet at the Kulm to-morrow morning. Good night. I do so trust we shall have a fine sunrise. Good night."

Apparently, no sooner have people fallen asleep than the Rigi horn is blown to wake them. All available clothes are huddled on, and as you turn out to go to the summit the chances are that the tourists already there resemble so many children of the mist. Rapidly the twilight pales, and the fleeting vapour goes and comes, exciting alternate hopes and fears. Now, probably, fleecy clouds completely hide the lakes, and the tops of Pilate and the Unterwalden mountains cropping up through them resemble sharp stones resting on a field of snow. Children roam about crying, "Alprosen, alprosen." People stamp their feet, blow on their fingers, and cuddle themselves in wrappers, but to little purpose; their limbs shiver and tongues chatter in the searching cold. The horn-blower who has wrought this woe now steps out from his knife-cleaning boot-smudging department to cry largess; and actually there are gentles simple enough to pay his little bill of penalties for their pains. Quondam guides sell Swiss wood carvings, pebble knick-knacks, and fold-up engravings of the view; and inquiring visitors, pointing vaguely towards the Oberland, and venturing on the best known name, thus to them repair:—

"Ist das die Jungfrau?"

MAN.—"Nein, nein; die Jungfrau ist hinter, hinter." (*Gutturally, without stops, and trying to get visitor's eye in a line with his extended arm and index finger*) "Eigherr Mönch Wetterrhorn Schreckhorn Finsterrarhorn mit der Spitze Buochserrhorn Titlis—"

"Danke, ja. Ich verstehe, thanks, ja, danke."

And then, as if solely by the light of nature he or she had made a great and meritorious discovery, the visitor repeats the information to a friend who has heard every syllable. Just as at exhibitions people will persist in reading labels, inscriptions, entries in catalogues, &c., to those who are standing by, and have eyes, ears, and opportunities as well as they.

"Yes, that's the Mönch, of course, and the Eighorn, and then comes the Wetterspitz—"

"No, no; the Wetterhorn. There's no Wetterspitz, I'm sure."

"Well, I said Wetterhorn, plainly."

"But which is the Schreckhorn?"

"Why, you see that one with the sharp peak, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, next to that is another peak, rather jagged, and covered with snow. Carry your eye above those two peaks to the right—rather in front of the first peak, as it were—and it's the peak above that."

"What, the peak between those two queer-looking ones, a little more peaked than the rest, to the left of the tallest peak of all?"

"Dear no; you couldn't have been paying attention to what I was saying. It's the peak—or stay; take it the reverse way, that's simpler—it's the peak that stands boldly out almost behind the gap with a peak in the middle—"

MAN (*volunteering, and as before*).—"Eigherr Mönch Wetterhorn Schreckhorn Finsterrhorn mit der Spitze Buscherrhorn," &c.

After the sunrise back they all rush to the *salle à manger*; a few with ravenous appetites, a greater number with horrible forebodings that about ten o'clock they will feel more dead than alive with the unwonted early rising. Mr. Funnymen excels himself. Like a modern burlesque, "he literally bristles with the most audacious puns," and consequently is a very unpleasant person to come into contact with. "He literally sets the table in a roar" with his splendid jokes and allusions. Some he slyly owns to be pointed ones, such as those about the ladies looking peakish this morning, or being piqued if the sunrise has been a failure, or that from the medley of barely distinguishable Bernese summits it was difficult to pick and choose, and so on. Everybody is in a strange feverish hurry to get away. The elder ladies are inhumanly strapped, like babies, to their saddles, to run a good chance of both wringing their necks and breaking their backs with the violent pitching and wabbling of the next two hours. Miss Kerlsrue, with veiled hat, festooned skirt, gauntlet gloves, and newly branded alpenstock garnished with a rose, "lingers yet a moment ere starting to contemplate the group of stalwart mountaineers so picturesque posed around the portal, and ardently wishes her pencil was graphic and facile enough to portray the characteristic scene." And in the evening, at Lucerne, she thus writes in her journal:—

"—— But I must draw near to a conclusion. As I now write these lines (at the Schweizer Hof), the glorious orb I this morning witnessed leave his eastern couch is sinking, all peacefully, bathed in a rich flood of light—golden, yet subdued with a flush of warmest purple hues—behind the cloud-capped Pilate's frowning mass. The gentle ripple of the Cantons' lake, plashing audibly against the quay, woos me also to repose. Whilst gazing up at that friendly roof which yielded shelter yesternight amid solitude—Alpine and unbroken—a twinkling light beams forth (probably from the *salle à manger*), and rivals in intensity the pale fires of the evening star. We arrived here safely to tea; I need hardly add highly gratified with our extremely novel—and, perhaps, at times dangerous—excursion."

MADELEINE GRAHAM

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WHITEFRIARS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LOVE-LETTERS.

THERE can be no doubt, I think, that Madeleine Graham exhibited as much courage and presence of mind in the conduct of her affairs as the great heroes are lauded for exhibiting in theirs. Unforeseen contingencies mostly found her alert and confident, full of resource and stratagem. No spider ever spun finer webs than some of her contrivances, nor ever repaired a damage or a rent with more rapid ingenuity and rally of effort than she. I like to praise her when I can; and I must say that in so very alarming a twist and dislocation as her schemes had now sustained, she behaved well.

She found Mr. Brown not unpleasantly engaged in emptying the decanter of sherry, unbottled for her revival, but scarcely touched, into his second tumbler, and frothing it up with water.

"Beg pardon, Miss,—I've ordered a cocktail on my own account; but I'm as dry as an old beehive; and rather than split altogether, while the fellow takes such a confounded time, I thought I'd venture on the liberty of your bottle," Mr. Brown observed.

Miss Graham, accepted the excuse with great amenity.

"You are perfectly welcome, sir; pray take a seat—as a friend of the gentleman whom I am so desirous of serving—for the sake of the dearest friend I have in the world—I shall be most happy if you will be pleased to make yourself perfectly at home." And this was said with a frank, sweet smile, which, on so beautiful a face, produced its effect even on the obtuse perceptions of Mr. Flamingo Brown. But he thought it necessary, too, to vindicate his proper national swagger and insolence in his reply.

"I'm much obliged, I'm sure, ma'am; but there's no occasion to tell me to make myself at home in a *hottel*. I always *am* at home in a *hottel*; in fact, I never live in anything else *when* I'm at home. You've heard, I dare-say, how we all live in *hottels* in Ameriky, man, woman, and child; and find it pay better than each sulking in a hole by himself, as you continue to do in the old country here. However, I say nothing against that; it is the land of my forebears, and I have a respect for it and its institutions, however much they differ from more enlightened nations, according-ly."

"Of your *forebears*, sir?" said Madeleine, who had never heard this singular word before; but it is good American for ancestors. And the American himself, be sure, was quite guiltless of the species of sarcasm he fancied he now detected in the young lady's repetition of the word.

"Oh, I'm a *bear*, am I? Wal, I calculate the more I *bear* the more I may *bear*!" he answered, very testily. "However, Miss, it would, perhaps, be as well if people who are so particular in their language were equal so in their doings!—What I say, I mean; so you need not look so contemptible-like at *me*!"

"Really, Mr. Brown, I do not know what you do mean; I am merely looking at you for an explanation; I understood you to bring some message to me from a foreign gentleman who requests my interference in an affair of great personal interest to himself;—and is aware that he's not regarded with any very great favour by the elder members of my family."

"And you was quite right, too, about its concerning also the dearest friend you have in the world, Miss!—Everybody knows who everybody's *dearest friend* is!—Your *own self*, I fancy, as much with you as with me; and any other person of good sense and calculating powers!"

"I spoke of another person in this instance, Mr. Brown; a young lady, a schoolfellow and beloved inmate in my father's family at present," returned the brave Madeleine, eyeing the messenger with well-dissembled alarm and visible query.

"But no other will serve the turn in this instance, Miss Graham!" was the stunning rejoinder. "For I have Mounseer Le Tellier's *positive orders and commands* to you to join him at once at the *Red Herring Tavern*,—where he's gone himself,—there to await Mr. Behringbright's arrival, and back the application he has come—I don't know how far out of the reg'lar way of business—to address to him. And he said you wouldn't *dare* to refuse!—And by your look this blessed moment I am quite of the opinion you won't!"

No doubt Miss Graham did look a little taken aback, a little astonished, a little thunderstruck, perhaps, if that experience admits of degrees, as she heard the words.

Ordered, commanded, by a young Frenchman, to join him at a low outlying tavern, to back an "application," of what nature could not be doubted, to Mr. Behringbright! To that million of money she had with so much difficulty got at last within her reach—not clutch! Exposure, destruction,—what else could be expected to ensue?

Nay, were they not already completed in the delivery of such a message by a man who, remembering the recent wrangle, Madeleine had reason to think had motives to do or say anything he believed could annoy Mr. Behringbright?

She must ascertain that point at once! All aglow in her secret heart with indignation, but speaking with outward composure, she inquired, "Has Monsieur Le Tellier then made *you*—a perfect stranger to most of the parties, I imagine—a confidant of his design, whatever it may be?"

Flamingo in his turn was rather taken off his hinges by the point-blank directness of the question. He remembered that his friend had most earnestly urged upon him not to provoke the young lady by any

intimation that *he* had betrayed the secret of the forbidden intimacy between them; much less the hints he had so incautiously thrown out, under the influence of vanity and the Yankee's sneering incredulity, of the resistless quality of the influence he possessed over her. Flamingo was even startled by the glance that accompanied the query, and vaguely roused to the notion that in truth he was setting his own foot on a somewhat dangerous movement in the grass!

"No, ma'am, Mr. Le Tellier has not!" he answered, rather shrinkingly. "Mr. Le Tellier is too much the gentleman, I should say, to *kiss and tell*; but he seemed to think whatever he wanted to do or to get done with Mr. Behringbright, you was the party to lend the stoutest pull at the ropes. For there can be no doubt in the almighty framework of things [he concluded, with a smile of some grim humour] that you have a pretty considerable say there—in the proper quarter, I mean—for what Mounseer wants."

There was no mistaking this innuendo. Nor had Madeleine a shadow of hope that Mr. Brown had missed espying her in the embrace of her newly betrothed wealthy suitor. Horribly vexatious, no doubt, this was, but it was a *fait accompli*. The whole consideration, however, suggested quite a bright expedient to her quick invention.

"It is true," she answered, without a ruffle on her brow or lip, that "I *have* a good deal of influence with Mr. Behringbright. Both my unfortunate friend and Monsieur Le Tellier are perfectly aware of that fact—in soliciting its exertion. And I am anxious to use it *always* to a good purpose: for example, Mr. Brown, if I could do anything to heal the little breach of friendly feeling which seems to have taken place between yourself and Mr. Behringbright, I should have very great pleasure in so doing;—particularly after what I heard you observe, that upon some trifling pique, in the transactions you have been engaged in together, Mr. Behringbright is about to throw away some exceedingly lucrative prospects of investment in your power to suggest."

"And so I did! Hog and heaven! I never heard such a sensible woman talk before!" exclaimed the Yankee, wise as he was in his generation,—knowing as he deemed himself in the ways of women, on the strength of one widowing and three divorces in his native land. "By jingo, you're a real Christian, ma'am! and the first duty of that kind of crittur, I have always heard, was to make peace wherever people are at loggerheads; and the way to do that isn't by pitting them together sure and certain, but putting them in a common notion of something lucrative in the way of business! That's what keeps us and the old country always only a-snarling and growling, but never coming to regular clawing and tearing! Jest you bring about a reconciliation between me and the great capitalist, and be hanged if I won't make it well worth your while, Miss, and I'll never make another stroke in the way of mischief about that Frenchman, s'help me! He's nothing to me; in fact, I would as soon, or sooner,

punch his head as not. And he deserves it, too, for the way he speaks about young ladies, that probably have no more to do with him than Mother Eve! But these handsome, finical beggars do sometimes get up a lady's sleeve before she has the sense to shake 'em out, and he has boasted you *must* come if he sent for you; and appointed me to bring you, as reg'lar as if I was execution sheriff, safely to the spot. But I hope I can keep a secret, if I see no reason to the contrary!"

A feeling of intense vexation and resentment kindled in Madeleine's inmost heart as she listened to this confirmation of her fears, and arrived at the conviction, that in spite of her requests and Le Tellier's solemnly plighted word, he had gratified his own vanity so unfairly at the expense of hers; perhaps had fatally compromised her reputation with this meddling and audacious stranger! Indeed, in spite of his disclaimers, she saw enough almost to convince her on this point in the malicious humour of the expression that shone on all the long hard lines of Flamingo Brown's physiognomy.

Still he was a stranger, and might be got rid of, she mused, if well managed, without any ruinous results to Camille's imprudence. It was worth while meantime to try what effrontery and resolution might effect in the way of removing or shaking his opinion, however formed or to what extent.

"Monsieur Le Tellier did not boast without reason, absolutely," she remarked, with a purposely audible sigh. "Nay, it is certain that he possesses a cruelly irresistible sway over all who cherish the unfortunate young lady whose confidence he has so shamefully——what was I about to say? No matter; I am quite ready to obey Monsieur Le Tellier's summons, and will thankfully accept so respectable an escort as is offered me to the place where he assigns me the rendezvous; which, as the abode of Mr. Behringbright, must also be of the highest respectability."

"Yes, Miss, I *am* respectable, and I am proud of the remark," returned the beguiled Flamingo, eagerly rising. "But I am not so sure of the respectability of the quarters we're a-going to. I hear it's a kind of inferior lodging-house and tea-gardens, and that sort of thing. And if you thought Mr. Behringbright wouldn't like you to go there, why, I'll go back and tell Frenchy so, and advise him to study manners better than to ask a lady to such an ass-ignation."

Madeleine had thought only at the moment how extremely desirable it would be to open an understanding with her rash lover, who seemed so likely to spoil everything by his interference, while she knew that Mr. Behringbright was at a distance. But this last broadly pronounced word startled her. She felt she was placing herself in Flamingo Brown's power, as well as being placed so by Camille's rashness; for she could not possibly pretend to Mr. Behringbright that she expected to find *him* at the "Red Herring," after just parting with him on an errand of life or death in another direction.

An intricate problem, therefore, presented itself for solution :—How to conciliate the imprudent Frenchman by a seeming assent to his demand, without any real compliance; boldly confront the suspicions of the American; and secure herself at the same time the chance of a private interview with Camille, which should remove the stumbling-blocks from her path, by the unconscious co-operation of his deleterious agent.

This was how she worked it out.

“Oh yes, my dear sir, I had forgotten—Mr. Behringbright *would* be surprised if I went to any out-of-the-way place like that in his absence; though Monsieur Le Tellier, of course, cannot know that he is not likely to return to his lodgings, if at all to-night, till late. But you can tell him from me—if, as I suspect but too strongly, his business admits of no delay—I will with pleasure cross the water with him at once to Glengariff. My aunt and uncle are there—and I owe it to the unfortunate young nobleman, the owner, to make the most friendly inquiries after his late accident. There is still plenty of the day left for the excursion—or we can go round by the land, if you would prefer it, to save time, in a car, and take up Monsieur Le Tellier on the way? It is a beautiful drive—and uncle and aunt can come home with me. So you will now be convinced, I hope, Mr. Brown, that I am not afraid to present myself, with this French gentleman in my company, to Mr. Behringbright?”

The American did seem now fairly nonplussed.

Assuredly he had seen with his own eyes a passage of love-making which, coupled with the probabilities of the case, made him conclude Camille's boasted secret betrothed was devoting her energies to secure the more valuable prize. But how was he to reconcile this readiness to comply with what he knew to be Le Tellier's purpose in the interview thus assented to, with the Frenchman's declarations?—ignorant, as the luckless booster had of course left him, of the facts that rendered it very unlikely he should take upon him to present himself in such a season of disorder in the house of a man who had treated him with public insult and injury?

“Why,” Flamingo burst out, staring in amazement at the young lady, “arn't you the main party yourself, and the one that he's going to ask Mr. Behringbright to let him marry, in spite of all her relations; like Romeo and Juliet?”

It was plain what Camille had been at now! But Madeleine was farther than ever from losing her head in this new whirl of the waters round her unsteady stepping-stones.

“Are you crazy, sir, or is Mr. Le Tellier?” she exclaimed, as greatly puzzled. “You have seen how Mr. Behringbright and I are situated, . . . or may guess! But what has he got to do with disposing of me in marriage, supposing he himself has no pretensions that way with me? I do not know, in short, whether it is your own misapprehension, or whether the young gentleman has purposely mystified you; but I am entirely igno-

rant of what you allude to, with the exception that I have promised to interest myself as much as I can to bring about the possibility of a union between Monsieur Le Tellier and a governess who resides in my father's family, of whom Mr. Behringbright has charitably constituted himself the protector. In this view I am perfectly willing, as I have said, to accompany you on your return to your friend, and proceed with him to Glengariff Castle."

"Wal, this does flog Barnum!—the impudent little French humbug! I wonder where he spied a slate off my roof, that he dared to let daylight into me through a cracked pane!" exclaimed Flamingo; "All his French bantam strutting, I suppose. Be darned if I don't go back and give him a good rubbing down with an oak towel, for sending me on a fool's errand! And yet didn't he tell me—yes, by Jupiter! he *did* tell me—that he had scores on scores of *letters* from you, which he could show to prove *everything*, in case you stuck up your back!—*EVERYTHING*, I say; and he seemed to mean a good deal by *everything*, from the way he said it! Everything! if you dared to play him any tricks with anybody,—if they were kings upon their golden thrones, or had California ready to settle on you for pin-money!"

Now, indeed,—and for almost the first time since the commencement of this startling interview,—Madeleine felt the palsying touch of fear!

Letters—letters from her—her letters—to Camille Le Tellier!

Now it must be confessed that, at the very best, love-letters are seldom a species of composition the writers, after the lapse of the Horatian interval, would willingly submit to the public approbation. There is apt to be a good deal in them of superfluous flight and fancy, which a taste, sobered and chastened by time—or the possession of the beloved object—is apt to discover most absurdly exaggerated, and out of all rational keeping. But without looking through the judicious lenses of time, Madeleine Graham knew very well that her letters were not of the kind to court a dispassionate inspection.

Certain it was, at all events, that no other man in the world, save him alone to whom those amatory effusions were addressed, could ever take Madeleine Graham to his heart without the consciousness that he was hugging disgrace and dishonour of the deepest dye. As for the honest-minded, sober-hearted George Cocker Behringbright, had he himself been the object of such an idolatry, he would have loathed and rejected it as the pure, grassy-breathed ox-god of India would turn with loathing and abhorrence from a sanguinary fetish of Dahomey offered in his honour. But what judgment would he form upon such compositions when he *was* not? And, of course, the grand danger of these letters lay in their capability of being submitted to *his* perusal.

These were reflections, which flashing with much greater rapidity than pen and ink can hope to photograph through Madeleine Graham's mind, did certainly give an unwonted quiver to her heart, and send the blood blanched downward from her rich complexion.

This was fear. But another sensation almost as instantly started, like a plague-spot of fire, in her inmost soul; and could Camille Le Tellier's feebler and much less harmful nature have appreciated how that first glow of resentment would spread in such a nature, he would have been a good deal more afraid than he had actually shown himself to offend his lady-love in so unhandsome a guise. For, after all, Madeleine was in the right to feel very much hurt and injured in the situation in which she was cast by Camille's vaunts and threats to this uncomfortable American stranger. Assuredly, honour should not be confined exclusively to the thieves of men's goods and chattels, and even such lovers have a right to expect a little among themselves!

What could she say or do in such an emergency?

I have noticed that people of matured wisdom and experience mostly say nothing when they don't know what to say. Young beginners, however,—especially of the feminine sex,—frequently do exactly the contrary. Still it can hardly be said Madeleine was betrayed into any very signal imprudence when, after a moment's pause, she exclaimed,—

"Letters!—letters of *mine*? They must be solely relating, then, to Monsieur Le Tellier and Miss Maughan's unhappy affair, in which I now almost regret to say I have interested myself long and rashly enough. But did he pretend to have any such proofs—such documents, I mean—of my complicity in so unhappy a love affair amongst his travelling paraphernalia? He easily might, for they must be very few—if any at all."

"He had a good large portmanteau with him, but I thought it was filled chiefly with French fal-lals and perfumery," said Mr. Brown.

"Most likely so, sir! And has he gone to lodge with this portmanteau at the 'Red Herring'?"

"So he told me—that he might be sure not to miss Mr. Behring-bright. But I don't think he is over flush of cash, either, for the great ho-tels, as you call them, over here."

Madeleine ruminated. Could Camille possibly have those letters in conveyance about with him, so numerous as they were? If so, it must be with a purpose. And she felt herself utterly in his power indeed! In the power of a man who had evidently so far, in mere vanity and inconsiderateness, placed so much of the vital secret of her existence at the mercy of a stranger!

Madeleine thereupon felt like one who has walked asleep to the verge of a precipice, starting awake! Oh me! the horrible sea that lurked below among the black, spiky rocks! The hideous gulfs of air that alone intervened! Even her clear brain grew dizzy, and reeled at the thought of so horribly pressing and near a destruction. Flamingo himself stared at the look of far-searching vacancy of terror she gave at him.

"Mercy on me, Miss!" he exclaimed. "But you *don't* seem to like it, now! For my part, I dare say it's all the fellow's talk. And if you say half a word I'll make him *prove* his words—or pull his nose for him and make him eat them."

"I am sure I am much obliged to you, and I will endeavour to prove myself worthy of so kind a friend," said Madeleine, extending her small and prettily jewelled hand to the vast paw of the American. "But," she resumed, with a great appearance of dignified composure and disdain, "I have resolved on quite a different course. Since Monsieur Le Tellier presumes to speak of me in so improper a manner, I will take no further notice of him or his affairs. Let him do his best or his worst, I defy and challenge him to it! I will return no answer whatever to his pretended commands. And if you are so kindly friendly towards me as you declare yourself, Mr. Brown, you will leave him to amuse the time till Mr. Behringbright's return, as he best may, and remain to partake of the excellent dinner our host will not fail to place before his company to-day."

"Is it an invite, Miss?—and am I to consider myself Mr. Behringbright's guest or yours?" said the Yankee, with a hungry clash of his ogre-like teeth.

"As my uncle's, sir. But I shall be happy to testify to Mr. Behringbright my opinion of the politeness and good feeling you have evinced in placing Monsieur Le Tellier's wishes in the least impudent and disadvantageous manner before me," said Madeleine. "In fact," she added, with a fascinating expression not altogether lost on the recipient, "if I take any further interest in the matter it will be because I desire to do honour to the zeal and eloquence of your advocacy of your imprudent friend's objects. Shall I desire the waiter to place a cover for you, Mr. Brown?"

"But you are not *afraid* to write a few lines in answer, are you, Miss, that in case of Mr. Le Tellier's obstinacy I may ask to compare them with the letters he pretends to have?" said Flamingo, who spied his advantages in that direction.

A most disagreeable and involving demand, in good sooth! But it would not do to hesitate.

"Certainly not," Madeleine answered. "I have no fear to let my handwriting be compared with any other, and I will write a proper answer to the French gentleman in your presence. Compare my writing when you like, and with what you like.—Rooney, an ink-standish and paper, if you please."

The waiter, who was getting better of his bottle-ends after a doze on the staircase, obeyed pretty promptly, and Madeleine seated herself with seeming indifference, but much secret agitation, to her task.

She certainly did not intend to put a specimen of penmanship in her own real handwriting on record. One may easily deny any other, provided the internal evidence is not too strong. Mr. Behringbright had never yet seen the genuine article, as she believed, and was right. Still she was rather flurried by the Yankee's evident watchfulness; and the only alien style she could think of just at the moment was the one she had practised up, with some little difficulty, in the imitation of Lady Glengariff's hand-

writing in the forged postscript. So she wrote what she wrote in that, and the words ran thus :—

“Miss Graham presents her compliments to M. Camille Le Tellier, and will take an early opportunity to mention the subject of his proposal to Miss Emily Maughan, to her dear friend's beneficent guardian. She must, however, decline any attempt to force Monsieur Le Tellier's wishes and presence upon that gentleman, until duly authorized by him, leaving it to his own good sense and feeling of propriety to choose a fitter time and place than he seems apparently to have selected.”

“Be darned if you seem at all afraid of him, however,” said Flamingo, on receiving this note, handed over to him open for perusal; “and I don't mind mentioning that I do now begin to think it very likely it is all gammon and lies on the Frenchman's part. He always struck me as being a deuced sight more of a windbag than a sack of wheat. And as a letter like this won't go off into spontaneous combustion, but will keep as cool in one's pocket as a cucumber in a larder, I'll do myself the honour, Miss, to accept your kind invitation, and remain to the *table d'hôte*.”

“I am very glad of it. But I see people coming in, and I ought to go and dress a little for dinner,” said Madeleine, smilingly accepting the position of inviter thus thrust upon her; “and so I must ask leave of absence for a few minutes, Mr. Brown. But there are plenty of newspapers and magazines, and lively people now, to amuse you till my return.”

And so saying, she made a light curtsy, and withdrew from the admiring gaze of the American.

“Isn't she a handsome European article, n'ither?” he muttered to himself, as she retired. “But still there's some double, in-and-out play in it, I'm sure. Only it's no business of mine, but rather the contrary, if so be as she will bring about a reconciliation between me and that high and mighty British capitalist. I haven't explained to her about the skins, either, but I will at dinner!—But can she be intending any sort of hocus trick upon me? I don't see what it can be; but I'll keep my eye on the staircase she's gone up, and see that she don't give me the slip.—Don't shut the door, waiter. I'm as partial to air as a grampus.”

And Flamingo hastened to plant his chair almost in the doorway of the grand saloon of Prospect Palace, leaning it back against a wall, with his large feet set tight by the heels upon the seat beneath—swaying backward and forward, and affecting to read a newspaper, but keeping his eye on the access to the apartment which Miss Graham appeared to ascend to.

This Mr. Brown, of America, was a person of great discernment, and thoroughly on his guard against the wiles of women; nevertheless, the apparition of an elderly female, in a very plain bonnet and thick veil, who shortly after came hobbling down-stairs as if she were lame, and went almost closely past him, with her head bent stiffly down, scarcely excited his attention.

Rooney was rather surprised, and muttered to himself, as he was laying the cloth for his forty-seven guests, "I didn't see Mrs. Doctor Bucktrout come in, that I know of—and now she's going out again." But it was Madeleine Graham, who had often disguised herself, and mimicked her aunt in jest, but who now found it convenient to play the part in earnest, and passed thus forth of Prospect Palace, unquestioned and unsuspected, in her artfully assumed costume.

CHAPTER XXXV.

AULD ACQUAINTANCE.

THE "Red Herring" was not exactly the proper designation of the establishment whither Madeleine Graham, changing her gait as soon as she was fairly out of Prospect Palace, now swiftly directed her steps. The original proprietor had been famous as a fisherman on the lakes, and being a great hand at preparing all the necessary gear for the sport, hung out a gilded wooden representation of a trout, as a sign of his whereabouts, on the end of a fishing-rod, from an upper window. But time, weather, and the ill-natured wit of envious contemporaries (fishermen also have them), had speedily transformed the "Golden Trout" into the "Red Herring." And now that the house had been converted into a tavern and lodging-house for guests of inferior respectability, the vulgar name stuck to it more pertinaciously than ever. It was, however, situated rather romantically on the roadside to Killarney, on the skirts of Kenmare Woods, at no very great distance from, but about halfway between, Prospect Palace and the town. A stage-coach, passing at the time Madeleine went out of the hotel grounds, seemed also to offer her a facility, of which she gladly availed herself. Not forgetting her character, however, as an elderly female, she hailed it in counterfeit weak accents, and chiefly by flourishing an umbrella of her aunt's, with which she had taken care to provide herself. The driver good-naturedly stopped, and a place being vacant in the vehicle, the guard, who was as like a giant as need be, affably lifted her in his arms, and stuffed her into it.

As it was now growing towards dusk, and Madeleine's face was enveloped in her thick, old woman's veil, it was not for several moments that she distinctly made out who were her fellow-passengers. Perhaps she was too much occupied with her own thoughts to take any particular notice at first. But she was rather struck, though vaguely, with the extremely fashionable figure of a lady, who was reclining, seemingly all but asleep, in a corner of the coach, but whose half-open feline eyes kept quiet note of all that occurred in it. Madeleine felt *that*, before she herself ventured to repay the stranger's furtive observation in kind, and then it was with the greatest difficulty she prevented herself from giving an outward sign of her inward astonishment; for without doubt those hard-lined, black eyebrows, those pear-shaped, flat cheeks, that bronzed

but pallid and dissipated complexion, that dishonest, lurking glance, were all distinguished attributes of Mademoiselle Olympe Lariôt!

It is not always so pleasant for "auld acquaintance" to rejoin one another on the road of life as the good-hearted old convivial song would make it appear. Madeleine Graham, at all events, felt no kind of call upon her to burst out into a pæan on the occasion; considerably to the contrary. She felt that such an arrival was an addition to her troubles, with which she could most gladly have dispensed at the moment, while her general perplexities were carried to the height to account for it.

What, indeed, could Mademoiselle Olympe Lariôt possibly want on the Lakes of Killarney?

Had she come on a professional visit among the pleasure-seekers there? But there was no theatre in Killarney, no scene for her displays; and after the riots she had occasioned even in the Protestant cities of the north of Ireland, it seemed unlikely that she should have determined to try her luck as an Orange dancer on the Catholic population of the south. The other persons in the coach were not, seemingly, of her company, and otherwise did not look at all like stage people; just the reverse,—country people.

It was very puzzling. Madeleine had no notion, after the strong repulse she had given her, that Olympe could have come after her. Had her old frenzy revived, then, and was she there in pursuit of Camille Le Tellier? That would not have been so bad. But how should she know Camille was in that part of the world? He was not likely to have given her any inkling of his proceedings; he was not so fond of her society. It was monstrously puzzling: but the height of imprudence—entirely out of the question—to inquire. Madeleine's principal hope and wish, on the contrary, were to keep altogether unknown and unobserved of her dear friend of the olden time.

But all of a sudden Mademoiselle addressed her, in excellent English, though with a vibrating, foreign accent,—

"Since you are probably a native of this country, Madame, will you favour me with information which are the estate and mansion of M. le Comte—the Earl, I mean, of Glen-garr-eeff?"

"What could Olympe want with knowing this?" thought her once pupil. But she was in no hurry to answer. She feared the recognition of her voice, disguise it as she might. Mademoiselle had so often lauded its musical accentuation to her. She took the best plan she could—pretended to be deaf, slouched her head down, gave an old-womanish cough, and was silent.

Another of the passengers in the coach, however, a man who looked like a farmer or a grazier, did duty for her.

"We can't see it through the wood, my lady; and besides, there is a mighty big mist gathered on the mountains over the place, which would prevent us, if we could," he said, most respectfully, to that showy bonnet and shawl.

"A thousand thanks, Monsieur! Ah, tell me, do you know this young lord personally? For me, I only know that he is the best, the bravest, the most generous of men; and I have come a long way out of my way to tell him so!" exclaimed Olympe, in an ecstatic tone. "Do but, at all events, point out to me the quarter of the horizon in which his honourable residence is situated! I have no other business in your mountains except to thank this generous young nobleman for a life not worth preserving, which he has saved. Where—where is it?"

"Good heavens!" thought Madeleine. "Is she still haunted by her old mania, and speculates on the chances of the conquest of Lord Glengariff, under pretence of expressing her gratitude to him? or has she come a-begging to him? She looks poor, though so bedizened in her garb! If so, she is going to be finely disappointed, and I shall soon be rid of her out of Killarney, if she don't suspect I am here."

None of the other passengers seemed able to point out the probable "quarter of the horizon" in question, not knowing what the phrase could mean. But Madeleine thought it not amiss to take the function upon her, which she did by literally pointing towards the black-peaked head of a mountain which reared itself in the distance, in a perfect sea of molten sunset gold, above the mists correctly described as concealing Glengariff Castle, and the lake at its feet, beyond Kenmare Woods.

Mademoiselle Loriôt gave a stare from the exquisitely gloved hand to the thick old veil of her cicerone, burst into a flourish of thanks, and put her head and half her lean but immensely crinolined framework out of the coach window, and continued to gaze so long in the point of view suggested, that she almost seemed to intend to occupy her position as a fixture, with all its consequences to the occupants of the vehicle. These were at once ludicrous, and a nuisance to most of the passengers; but Madeleine was rather pleased at having so turned attention away from internal concerns; like one of those politic kings of old, who always got up a foreign war when threatened with commotions at home. But she repented her cleverness when Mademoiselle Loriôt suddenly drew her figure back, and sunk breathless into her place in seeming horror and dismay, exclaiming, "*Dieu! encore cet homme!*"

"What *man*?" Madeleine could not hinder herself from exclaiming, and in her own natural accents; but at the instant the coach had stopped, the door was flung open, and the guard called out, in stentorian accents,—
"Here you are, old lady! Here's the 'Red Herring'!"

On the other hand, mealing like a proper Frenchman in the open air, in a species of Swiss balcony raised on arches of rough-hewn timber round the house, Monsieur Camille Le Tellier was distinctly visible, seated in a rustic chair above, with a cup of coffee beside him on a little table. He was sipping this, and affecting to study the contents of a little tattered Parisian paper in his hand. But his eye fell immediately on the stoppage below; and it was pretty plain, from his raised eyebrows and general

startled look, that he heard the exclamation, though perhaps he did not know exactly whence it came.

"*Mon Dieu!—cette terrible femme là encore!*" was the reciprocation of this modern Eneas to his Dido's similar utterance. Fortunately the coach made no delay; and as soon as Madeleine touched the ground the driver flourished his whip, and the horses trotted upon their destined route.

Madeleine found herself at liberty in a few instants to pursue her original object. There was no occasion for any announcement. She saw she had only to mount the outside gallery stairs to find herself face to face with her *ci-devant* lover. But her disguise must have been admirably executed, since even he did not at all recognize her until she spoke, although she straightened her figure, and altered it about as completely as a goddess who has adopted some old nurse's, to do an errand of Olympian Jove—and has done it.

"Camille!" she said, "Monsieur Le Tellier!—do you not know me?"

The accents she used were so cold and distant that it would have been excusable enough if Le Tellier had not recognized the speaker even then. But he did so—and started up with a lover-like exclamation, and seeming intention to clasp his betrothed to his heart, when a gesture from her repelled the movement.

"People may observe—and besides, all that sort of folly is over for ever now between us!" she said, quite sternly; and seeing that he looked at her with an angry as well as startled expression (she meant to startle him), she continued, "If for no other reason, I would discharge you for ever from my heart and confidence for your treason to love and honour in the revelations you have confided to an impudent stranger!"

"You are mistaken, dearest Madeleine!—Mees Graham!—I have confided nothing! Mr. Brown has told you a lie if he has asserted to the contrary. I have only used him as my messenger—if you mean the American gentleman—because I was afraid, as usual, that in spite of your forced invitation you would be displeased with me for appearing before your relations," said Camille, very earnestly.

"Have you not told him that you have *letters*—the most compromising for me!—which you carry about with you everywhere, at every risk of what may befall to them or yourself—and in them to me?" said Madeleine, with more anxiety than she suffered to appear on her countenance.

"Letters that compromised you? Never. I never said so. Letters full of the effusions of an unsurpassable affection and generosity, I may have said; but no possible risk is incurred with them. I carry them with me always in my portmanteau, which I scarcely ever lose out of my sight, and never but under the most faithful locks and keys," deprecated Camille. Madeleine had decidedly taken the true and proper position of the person who is most to blame in a quarrel—the upper and hectoring.

"You have them with you, then?—And so often as I have asked you to destroy them!" she returned.

"But I found it impossible, *ma chere*. They are my only consolation—my only assurance—in your absence. I should fear to lose my hold entirely of the past without them. When ever a doubt of your fidelity arises in my heart, I am obliged to read those *naïve* effusions of your tenderness often and repeatedly, before I can satisfy myself that I have no real reason for apprehension."

"But you are wrong to do so, Camille—my feelings are much changed," Madeleine answered, provoked a good deal more than softened by this loving statement. "You know we have always agreed that we are not the masters of our inclinations, we unfortunate mortals! And women can no more help feeling a chill of the affections than men—who are very subject to it. Besides, there is no chance of our ever forming a happy union. Fortune, my father, your poverty and foreign descent, are all opposed to it. And so I plainly tell you I have made up my mind that we must part. I am very sorry for it, but really I cannot help it. And this last stupidity of yours in introducing a great rough bear of an American backwoodsman into our affairs has completely disgusted me with you. I come to take a quiet but eternal farewell of you; and to propose terms on which we can part, advantageously for both."

Camille listened as if he could hardly believe in his own senses. But a sudden idea seemed to restore the balance of his faculties.

"Great heaven! it is all true, then!" he exclaimed, clenching his fists to his forehead with a theatrical air of desperation. "And the means whence I hoped to draw our salvation will only prove the destruction of my happiness! The worst suspicions which her going about with this immensely rich man so naturally provoked, are confirmed, and it is a traitress of love for money whom I am going to ask to share with me my supplications for assistance, to the very occasion of the crime!"

"The crime! What nonsense you talk, Camille! But you are quite right about the absurd plan you have formed. It was downright madness in the very beginning—based on the ridiculous notions people on the Continent have of the English. You grudge one another a knob of sugar, and you think we are always handing over thousands of pounds to anybody who likes to ask it! Mr. Behringbright is a very rich man; but he is rich for himself and for others who are of use or pleasure to him, not for all the world: never think it. I tell you also that you are quite right in supposing you could not make him a more disagreeable request than for my hand. Why do you look at me so surprised? I speak to you with perfect candour and simplicity, because I really want you to understand what I say, and that I mean precisely what I do say."

Camille, indeed, looked very much surprised; men seem always amazed when women do hard and perfidious things. Perhaps they think they ought to have the monopoly.

A short interval of wonder, however, seemed to awaken him more effectually to the situation. His handsome French visage and florid cheeks blackened all over with rage.

"After such a declaration," he observed, with a quivering smile on the lower portion of the visage, in portentous contrast to the upper, "Mademoiselle will excuse me for repeating that I need every support to my convictions of her former sincerity, and that I believe I retain them in the *letters* to which allusion has been made."

"Is this a threat, Camille?" Mademoiselle replied, with an expression of scorn that did not quite conceal apprehension. "But do you not know that to betray a woman's confidence of the kind will be to consign yourself to the universal contempt of your fellow-men? The basest and most dishonourable of your sex in other matters own yet some last vestiges of respect to this sentiment. And you, Camille, are a Frenchman and a gentleman, and you will never disgrace the name of either by—by so unhandsome a procedure."

"You would be alone to blame, Mademoiselle, if I did so," returned Camille, with some feeling in his accents, but also much bitterness. "I warn you; do not force me to forget everything but the just vengeance I should then owe to humanity and my own outraged heart."

"Are we sure not to be overheard here?" said Madeleine, looking cautiously around. "But let us speak on in French: they say that is the proper language of diplomacy; and after all, my dear Camille," she continued, adopting with perfect facility the language in question, "it has come to that between us."

"I am all attention to Mademoiselle."

"And reasonableness, I hope. But to speak, then, plainly, and without so much useless circumlocution—We both of us see very clearly we never can marry under existing circumstances. We both of us want to be rich and well off in all particulars. I am not saying it to reproach you, Camille; but you remember your own little affair with Olympe Loriôt—who, by-the-by, seems by some strange chance to be in Killarney at this very moment. She has told me a thousand times, though I never dwelt on so disagreeable a circumstance to you, that you courted her to distraction as long as you thought she was wealthy, and cut her the moment you found she was poor."

"She was an impostress, a swindleress; represented herself as a person she was not."

"As her own rich pupil? Well, that only confirms what I say. But, remember, you also attempted to pass yourself off upon me as a French nobleman, originally. Now hear me patiently. My chance is of an impostor of quite a different order—an immensely rich man, who has pretended to be a poor one in order that he might be certain to secure himself a wife who loves him for himself alone."

"A wife? And do you pretend to be that personage to Mr. Behring-bright? A wife who loves a bald old man for *himself* alone? Aha, but I shall spoil that game," ejaculated Monsieur Le Tellier.

"You can destroy me, no doubt; ruin me in the glorious speculation

I have on hand; but you cannot do yourself any good thereby," returned Madeleine, who did not at all like the tone in which these words were said. "Whereas, by the plan I propose—"

"Be pleased to propose your plan, Mademoiselle."

But even Madeleine Graham did not like this uncomfortably plain way of demanding and putting the case. Half the wickedness of the world, at least, is transacted under doubtful lights, and without a word of explanation among the parties. Madeleine, however, felt she was on the tight rope, and that it would not do to start and boggle at a little jerk.

"What plan do I propose? Why, that I should be *allowed*—if you require the phrase—to marry a millionaire.—*This* millionaire who proposes to me—and to make you rich and happy in your turn as a consequence."

There was a considerable pause.

"Your intention is, then, to marry—*marry* Behringbright Brothers, you mean to say? And consign me, *me*, ME, to the derision, to the scorn, to the incredulity, of the world!" then thundered Monsieur Camille Le Tellier, in reply.

The world, the world! Most of us have a world that is not extremely wide. What *world* did Monsieur Camille mean in his expression? Upon my honour, I think Monsieur Camille Le Tellier's *world* was composed of about a dozen commercial travellers, to whom he had confided the certainty of his approaching marriage—and settlement in a large way of business—with the beautiful eldest daughter of Sir Orange Graham, Knight, and ex-mayor of the great city of Belfast. But in this world, no doubt, figured the immediate and tremendous presence of Flamingo Brown, to whom he had boasted more than to the rest of all his "*world*" besides, and whose bullying manner betokened that he would hold him firmly to the interpretation.

Madeleine was not far wrong when she exclaimed, in reply, "Pho! What terrible stuff! What need you care about the *world*, as you call it? What world are you talking about? There is no world, where, if you are rich, you will not be well considered; and I intend to make you so as well as myself. I *must*, in fact, with those letters in your possession!"

"Listen to me, then, wicked woman!" returned the young man, with sudden fierceness and determination; and I do not take upon me to say the feeling was merely one of wounded personal vanity, or doubtfulness of the advantages held out to him. "I will not *suffer* you to play this detestable part you assign yourself—and would fain induce me to become your accomplice in! You are my *wife*, in the sight of God—by all the laws of nature and love!—and my wife you shall remain! You shall never sacrifice Camille Le Tellier to your remorseless thirst for wealth—of all that your purse-proud father hates and rejects me for not being able to obtain! And how should I? Gold is only purchased by gold! I have no capital—no fortune—no possibilities! and you attempt to mock me with a shadow of contingent advantages, which your traitorous heart will

repudiate the moment your prey is secure! But, poor as I am, I am a man, and have the privileges of a man! I have won you—I have subdued—I have conquered you, woman! You are mine! Woman, I am your husband, or you are the vilest of your sex! And do you dare to tell me you will take another man instead of me, for money? I say you shall NOT! I will reveal all to him rather! Do you hear me? I will reveal ALL to the millionaire Behringbright! Do you defy me? Do you deride me? I have your letters—YOUR LETTERS, Mademoiselle! Such letters as perhaps were never written before by woman to man! These I will produce before the eyes of all the world! And now do you deem me powerless—abject—resigned to see you confute me to everybody who regarded me as the future son-in-law of a powerful merchant?—of an insulting British *plutocrat*, who, having no other objection against me, except that I am not worth five thousand a year, deprives me of my fair right to the wife I have won, and would thankfully condemn me to—ay, what would he not condemn me to, were *he* the judge—and *you*—even you—the executioner?”

Camille Le Tellier broke short with these words, remarking the strange, the horrible look Madeleine had now fixed upon him. It was vacant—and yet full of terror! It seemed looking at something that was not there, and yet *was*; a spectral thought! It terrified Camille with its no-meaning more than the most violent expression of indignation; and the blood almost curdled in his heart; though Madeleine filled the pause by most quietly observing, “You are excited, Camille; take some of your coffee; you seem fond of coffee.”

“I *am* fond of coffee,” Camille remarked, passionately drawing his cup away from her propinquity; “but I should fear to drink it after you have looked in it thus! It seems to me that you have the power to infuse poison into my drink with such a glance—and that you have the criminal barbarity to wish to do so at this moment!”

Madeleine laughed, a little hoarsely and huskily.

“What a silly fellow you are to talk so! You should not put such ideas in people’s heads; but I believe some poisons are good for the complexion; and you are very proud of your complexion, you know, Camille. Did I not tell you once, when you said I looked pale and thin, that I had read in a book how arsenic—for example—fattened one up, and made one like quite plump and florid? I believe you have taken the hint, you look so well! I don’t know that I look very well myself of late—I am sure I did not just before I left Belfast, what with your worrying and Emily’s; so perhaps I may try a little *on myself*—not you—and make it a pretty strong dose on some occasion, if ever I hear of your trusting strangers again, or any further, in our affairs! So you see, if you have your letters, I have an antidote to them. Bah! we are talking melodrama like two lovers in a last chapter of one of Sue’s novels. Let us be reasonable creatures—one of us at least isn’t French! Come, I admit that you have the power in your hands;

but do you really mean to say that you will not allow me to marry where only I find it feasible to secure a respectable establishment?"

"I have failed, then, to make myself understood," returned Camille, with an evident revival of exasperation. "Listen again, then. In the eyes of the law I have no power of control over your actions, Miss Graham. I am *not* your husband in law. But I am the proprietor of the letters sent to me, and I swear to you the moment I hear of any decided and real intention on your part to commit a moral bigamy with this Plutarch Behringbright—a man also who has insulted me, who has refused me my right of reparation as a gentleman, whom it will be useless now to importune in my favour—I will transfer all my rights to the entire collection in *his* favour, stipulating only that he shall *peruse them*—from the first young lady *billet* signed in your name to the last, which blushed to give itself any signature at all, but does not need the glasses of an expert to be recognized as undoubtedly of the same caligraphy."

These words were pronounced in tones that carried conviction to Madeleine's inmost soul. She felt that after overcoming so many obstacles to secure her grand prize—after daring all the risks she had incurred respecting Emily Maughan—after spending a great deal of money on an otherwise stupid and tiresome excursion—after having compromised herself completely with her family for any future claims to meaning and sagacity in her enterprises—the vanity of a French coxcomb arose before her, an impassable wall of adamant, and debarred advance to the gleaming mountain of gold in prospect, for ever.

Had it even been a real Cupid, god of love, that thus refused to acquiesce in the extension of his name into *cupidity*! But Madeleine felt quite assured it was not personal devotion to herself, so much as the resolution to keep possession of a valuable "material guarantee," that was acting upon the mind and resolves of Camille Le Tellier. No woman could have remained so perfectly insensible to the implied passionate obligation, had she believed in it. She felt only, therefore, the more irritated at the pretence assigned to the obstinacy that was likely to effect so enormous an injury to her prospects. While she rapidly recalled these things—these dangers—these difficulties—these deprivations—this failure—this humiliation—this inextricable entanglement—that first burning touch of resentment which Flamingo Brown's revelations had kindled in her breast, spread like a circle of ravening caustic through all its fibres, till her whole heart seemed to glow like a ball of fire in its confines. A feeling of the utterest hatred and contempt—of desperate desire and resolve to escape from this paltry yet overmastering thralldom—seemed to light up in her brain, darting upward from those lappings of suppressed but flaming fury. And a THOUGHT—a tremendous, solitary THOUGHT—started into glaring existence, and, growing in intensity with every moment's revolution of time, seemed to convert Madeleine Graham's whole beautiful headpiece into a dark lantern of hell—glaring within with murder, malice, and revenge; without, all black calm and impervious serenity.

About two minutes of utter silence with Madeleine did a work which all the ages of time could not undo. Then she spoke.

"If you are really in earnest, Camille,—if you really love me so much and truly,—of course I will not for a moment entertain any project which you do not approve," she said, in very sweet, humble, and, as it were, heart-subdued accents. "In fact, I love you a thousand times better than ever, dearest, for your manly determination and evident devotion to me; and whenever you are prepared to embrace every extremity of poverty by marrying me, in spite of my father's refusal and renunciation, I am quite ready to become your wife in *law* as well as in love!—this day, this hour, this very minute, if you like."

Camille, however, had no great relish in his secret heart for poverty. He had known and seen a good deal of it; and it did not seem to him likely to be much more endurable with a fine young lady to share it, and upbraid him at every turn for its disadvantages, than alone. Had he dared to be poor, he would not have been the man he was,—or, rather, he would have been *a* man! Of course he expressed this idea, which in reality chiefly related to himself, in the proper sentimental form.

"No, Madeleine, no!" he exclaimed, with heroic fervour. "I will not suffer you to commit a crime against love and honour. But I will never ask of you to share so poor a portion as mine is in this world till some unforeseen good fortune,—the relenting of your avaricious family,—points out to us the means of a happier fate and union."

Madeleine knew very well what this meant. Monsieur Le Tellier had frequently intimated that her father ought to give her a portion of at least five thousand pounds; furnish them a house and all conveniences handsomely; and give him a partnership in his manufactory. Her father, on the other hand, had threatened to turn her out of doors if she dared for a moment to encourage the addresses of a "penniless foreign vagabond," and was the kind of father to keep his word.

No doubt it increased her irritation to be the victim not only of such inordinate but such useless selfishness! She looked at Camille, and the handsomer she saw he was, or thought that he considered himself, the more she disliked and despised him for such a mean, senseless, overbearing excess of personal vanity. But it behoved her to keep these ideas to herself. Perhaps, however, they partly suggested the new but most necessary combination of intrigue that arose in her protean brain.

"I did not suppose I could be brought to admire you more than I have always doné, Camille," she said, still in those fascinating, melting, and molten tones. "But I am delighted, proud—very proud—to find you prefer me even to that idol of fortune of which I once supposed you so earnest an adorer that you would not hesitate even at that sacrifice—at any sacrifice—to it! I confess that was one of the motives which strengthened me to my own immolation, though with every imaginable reluctance and remorse. But let us now consider if it may not be possible

to conciliate your noble scruples with the plan of extrication I had proposed myself. I have not hesitated to avow to you that I am an object of preference with the wealthy Behringbright,—doubtless with the most honourable views, for he is incapable of any other. Of a cold and lethargic disposition, as he is—and steeled by my affection and engagements to you—it would, however, be perfectly easy for me to play with his passion for almost any length of time, and meanwhile induce him to do almost anything I desired of a character to demonstrate his attachment towards me. He believes that I have a great friendship for Emily Maughan; and could he be brought to view in you . . . no rival of his own tenderness . . . but rather a suitor for the hand of a young person, his ward, whom I know he is desirous to settle advantageously in life; I think it might be easily managed, and that he would do all for you your absurd French fancies have suggested. Once placed in possession of a competency, your vanity—if you have any—shall be more amply gratified than it could possibly be by any other means, by all the world beholding how Madeleine Graham will prefer you to the richest man in England as a husband!”

Camille opened his large blue, hairdresser's model-like lustrous eyes at this suggestion, so agreeable to all the most dominant impulses of his nature.

“Ah! if this were possible, my Madeleine!” he exclaimed.

“Why should it be impossible? I have already possessed Mr. Behringbright with the notion; nay, I have myself sometimes been crossed by a jealous apprehension to that effect, that in reality you have a regard—I had almost said a preference—for *Emily Maughan*.”

“Absurd!—it is utterly nonsensical! For a young woman who has always treated me with a marked distance—I had almost said, with aversion and repulse!” exclaimed Camille, but with a conceited smile which again suggested a still more dexterous leading to Madeleine.

“You are absurd now yourself, dear Camille,” she resumed, with a glance full of secret scorn and seeming admiration. “I have a thousand reasons to consider that it was simply resentment for finding me the object of your gallantry that rendered Emily so malicious towards us both, and put her upon doing all she could to warn me against you, and to sever us. Camille, what will you say if I confide to you a secret? You do not, with all your experience, understand all the intricacies of a woman's nature. What will you say if I declare to you I know it for a certain fact that Emily Maughan has refused the hand and coronet of an earl—of that very young nobleman who nearly threw you over into the Belfast pit, and who is now suffering himself from the effects of a reprisal from an exasperated animal, and that I believe this amazing rejection is prompted solely by a secret preference in her heart to another! In fine, that that other—I believe I should not be far wrong in asserting—is, must be, the only attractive young man with whom she can ever have been thrown into contact. In brief, Camille, *yourself*!”

Le Tellier was not so struck with amazement and incredulity at this climactical word as he ought to have been. Of course all the qualities in the male sex are more strongly developed than in the female, where they exist at all; and a man-*coquette* is free to believe in the influence of his charms even more extensively than the feminine creature of the same genus.

"Good heavens! how is it I never suspected, never apprehended, so *lisastrous* a complication? After all the accounts you gave me of Miss Maughan's unkind interference in our affairs—dissuasives of you against me! And do you assure me it is a fact, Madeleine?—*You?*"

"I do not assure you it is a *fact*, only a probable surmise,—which after all may be but the fancy of my own too partial judgment," replied Madeleine. "But, true or not, it is a great probability, and sufficient ground for the plan I have hinted to you. Remove Mr. Behringbright's apprehensions of the most dangerous of rivals in you, by proposing to him or Emily Maughan, and I assure you of a handsome establishment in life, which shall then be shared with you, I trust by a wife a good deal more to our mind."

"But it is folly. Emily Maughan will decline the offer—she will declare that she never entertained it. I shall seem like a madman to Mr. Behringbright."

"But Emily is remote—impassably distanced from this spot by her ejection of Lord Glengariff. I will make myself the medium of all communications, and will report what I please. Meanwhile Mr. Behringbright will be engaged in your favour; I shall dare to press your claims on his consideration. Not a moment, I swear it, shall be lost to accomplish the grand object we have in view, if you will only lend me your aid thus far in righting ourselves in the position. I do not ask you to declare anything compromising. Ask only permission to pay your addresses to Emily as the meaning of the *business* you declared yourself—and have offered the American to report everywhere—you have with Mr. Behringbright. Leave to me the task of convincing *him* that he will thereby promote the happiness of his ward, and his own tranquillity."

Camille—like all men who are pretty certain not to arrive at a correct judgment—reflected profoundly.

"You engage me a little out of my depth, Madeleine," he said at last, in a considerably puzzled tone. "But I am sure that as long as I retain our letters—of which no one shall deprive me but with my life—you will not dare to play me false in the matter. Therefore I may perhaps venture on the step you urge upon me. But know for certain that I remain in this country, in this very house which your Mr. *Brownjohn*—ha! ha! what folly to deprive himself of his only merit!—also inhabits, a perpetual observer of your actions; and that I will not suffer any increase of the intimacy you admit to exist between yourself and the millionaire Behringbright. It is for you to extricate us all as speedily as possible from a

painful position, by securing to me this establishment, which you are then immediately to share with me. I have a right to consent to your project: I owe reprisals to the insolence and tyranny of wealth in your country."

"He would remain on the spot, would he, the dangerous fool!" thought Madeleine. But with her customary tact she perceived it would do rather harm than good to add a word that might still seem to combat Camille's suspicions, only half lulled to rest. She took it for granted he was convinced. Much was meanwhile gained. The danger of an immediate destructive revelation to Mr. Behringbright averted; one of her most necessary fallacies was to receive a tangible support; Camille himself was compromised in her manœuvres; time was gained, above all—time for that other certainly tremendous, and horrible, and perilous, but, if successful, a most assured escape from all her difficulties!—or for some easier deliverance, if such were possible—time, at all events, to reflect; to lay plans deeply and inscrutably; to provide against the possibility of detection. Detection of what? Madeleine had not *yet* pronounced the *word* even to herself; the idea stood erect, full, unblenching in her mind, as a figure of the sheeted dead in a churchyard!

All that remained at that time to be done was to complete the restoration of Camille's credulity in her affection for him, and submission to his will. Aided by such boundless vanity, this needed no great effort; but we need not remain present at the process. It is enough that the treacherous siren succeeded.

She even prevailed upon Camille to promise he would do all in his power to dissipate the impressions he had "unintentionally" given to the American Brown. Madeleine knew she had prepared that gentleman to receive the disavowal patiently, and suggested that it could easily be done, by Camille's receiving the cool note she had penned him quietly, and seeming to acquiesce in its contents. Above all, he was to take no notice that it was *written in a different hand* from her usual one—*purposely*: she would not place herself in any way in the power of such a fellow!

Returning, after this interview, to her quarters, Madeleine thought she had a right to congratulate herself on the results of her audacity in thus stealing a march along the entire battle-array of adverse circumstances. Most cleverly had she shifted her own strategic ground: even the certainty she had acquired of the arrival of Mademoiselle Olympe Loriôt in her vicinity—which would have disquieted her at another time—rather added to her satisfaction now;—a power of doubtful hostility, perchance, at present, but in whom an ally might be created, if dexterously handled.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

CONGRATULATIONS.

MADELEINE found she had been absent about an hour and a half; but dinner was not yet served. Luckily, Flamingo Brown, having solaced himself with a great quantity of cobbles, slings, and cock-tails, and made aware that dinner would be at the "damned aristocratic hour" of seven, had fallen asleep in his post of observation. Madeleine, therefore, got comfortably enough past him. But she horrified Rooney, the waiter, again, who met her, and uttered a terrified exclamation—explained to Madeleine by finding her aunt in her bedroom. The poor man was assured he had encountered, for the second time that day, Mrs. Bucktrout's *wraith*, or double, as he styled it, and confidently predicted in the kitchen and servants' hall that the old lady would shortly be called to her count.

Mrs. Bucktrout, who had made a number of stupid inquiries for her niece before she looked on her dressing-table, and saw a short pencilled note, to the effect that Madeleine had borrowed her old cloak and bonnet for a joke on young Sparrowgrass, was looking rather dull and puzzled over it, as if she did not quite understand joking at such a time. She even complained so a little to her niece on her entry in the disguise, and did not seem quite to like it, even when Madeleine admitted that it was very considerate of her; but that the foolish young fellow had wagered her a sovereign she could not take him in in any possible disguise she could assume; and she had met the whole party at the landing pier, and they did not know her, and she should earn her sovereign. But how was poor dear Lord Glengariff? Of course the accident was much exaggerated,—and how had it happened? And was he much hurt? or was it all a false report? and where was her uncle? And had not Mr. Behringbright lived with plenty of other doctors, in case there was any need of them?

Mrs. Bucktrout replied in the methodical order she usually observed her trains of ideas. No; it was all too dreadfully true! In bending towards the stag "to open its throat with his hunting-knife" (was the delicate phrase used by Mrs. Bucktrout), Lord Glengariff had overreached himself in making an imprudent effort to grasp the terrible creature by the tlers, and had been fearfully gored in the right arm and side. It was with the greatest difficulty, Mrs. Bucktrout averred, that three of the Glengariff rowers had beaten the stag off with their oars. The young lord had lost *pails of blood* before Dr. Bucktrout could bind up the lacerations!

He had, however, preserved all his senses and faculties till they got ashore, and though then in a very weak state, had insisted on walking to the Castle from the landing-place, to avoid alarming his excitable parent. He had even managed to preserve sufficient strength and energy

to go to his mother himself, mention that an accident had occurred to him, and convince her, by his own unconcerned manner, that it was of no great consequence, being certain the report would soon reach her. Nay, she was believed to have supernatural means of intelligence in all misfortunes of the kind to her family. But as soon as this important duty was gone through, his strength had failed him,—he was obliged to be supported to an apartment and put to bed. In this situation Dr. Bucktrout had dressed his wounds, and pronounced them of the most dangerous character. He had even declined to answer for the life of his patient,—particularly if he was in the least disturbed or agitated. Accordingly, when even Mr. Behringbright had arrived with two of the Killarney surgeons, the young Earl had refused to see them, declaring that he had the greatest confidence in the skill of the Doctor; and his mother, who was in constant attendance upon him, had supported him in his refusal! Mr. Behringbright was excessively irritated and alarmed at the fact, not apparently entertaining the highest opinion of the Belfast medicines and skill, though he did not express himself to that effect. And he had retained his two surgeons at Glengariff; and while hastening Mrs. Bucktrout back to the charge of her niece, had desired her to state that he should remain all night at the Castle, in hopes that he might prevail upon an acceptance of the reinforcement of surgical aid he had brought with him. At the same time Lord Glengariff had objected to see even Mr. Behringbright himself, being, doubtless, much offended with his singular conduct on the Lake, as regarded Madeleine that day; which Mrs. Bucktrout, for the first time turning a little rebellious, professed herself unable, indeed, to understand.

The aunt still spoke of Mr. Behringbright as Mr. *Brownjohn*; but Madeleine felt now it would be necessary for her future influence and proceedings to clear up this mystery to her relative. She therefore explained to her aunt that this was merely a name assumed by one of the richest of English merchants, who had taken a fancy to her, she almost believed, when she was a girl at school in London, had followed her to Ireland, and had that very morning made her an offer of marriage, which she had accepted.

The whole wonderful affair was now made clear and patent to Mrs. Bucktrout's not illimitable capacity. Oh, how glad she was! With what admiration she looked at her niece! How well convinced she felt, in spite of the latter's disclaimers, that she had all along known what a wealthy suitor was in pursuit of her under that assumed name!

"Won't your father be glad, and your poor mother, who were so plagued at one time with the idea of your doing something silly with that French beggar! Won't Mrs. Sparrowgrass be ready to eat off her fingernails, after all the trouble she took to keep you from her son, to find you have done so much better! I'll let them all know it at dinner! How mad it will make them!"

Neither, in spite of the addition to her risks it involved, could Madeleine deny herself this signal public triumph. She was even no longer apprehensive that Flamingo Brown should hear of it. It would rather confirm him in his belief of her power with the great capitalist, and consequent wish not to meddle offensively any further in her affairs, while it would go far to remove any degree of adherence he might still retain in the boastings of Camille Le Tellier.

It was rather funny to witness the effects of the intelligence in question ; at first circulated in the most quiet, unintentional, underhand style by Mrs. Bucktrout, who was sly enough in her own way.

Mrs. Sparrowgrass took occasion, when the soup was removed, finding herself with only her son between her and Mrs. Bucktrout, to express how pleased she was to think that her niece, Miss Graham, had been spared such a dreadful shock as Lord Glengariff's accident must have been to everybody on board his lordship's barge, by accepting the invitation of the commercial gentleman *staying at the "Red Herring"* into his boat. Everybody wondered at it, she said, at the time, but it had turned out so much for the best.

"Of course my niece could not do otherwise ; she is engaged to Mr. *Behringbright*," replied Mrs. Bucktrout, with dignity.

"Engaged to Mr. Behringbright ? What Mr. Behringbright ?" stammered young Sparrowgrass, turning very pale over his second plate of fish.

"Behringbright Brothers, the head of the firm, Mr. Sparrowgrass ; you must have heard of them in London," said Mrs. Bucktrout, with most determined coolness.

After that, Grassgreen Sparrowgrass, Esq., ate not another morsel, though he took plate after plate of anything that was offered him during the remainder of the dinner. He drank, however, in great profusion ; moselle and brandy went down his throat at a rate that perfectly alarmed his mother, who in vain repeatedly observed what a fine match Lord Glengariff's sister, the Lady Gwendoline, must now have become, in case his lordship should die. And Sparrowgrass had hysterics that night in his own bedroom, with his mother and all his sisters attending him ; and went on like a little madman, and reproached them with being the cause of the unhappiness of his whole life, by not allowing him to propose, as he had wished a hundred times, before that old horrid fellow came into play.

The Misses Sparrowgrass were much surprised and offended on their own account, when they heard all about it. What an artful minx she must have been ! She must have known all about it. She never would have looked at such a strange, shy, unaccountably behaving a man, if she had not known all along how rich he was. But it was no wonder, her father was *in trade* (their own had been out of it ever since he died, and they were only just out of mourning for him) ; and so, no doubt, she knew all about people *in trade*. For their parts, they would not have had a

person *in trade* for all the world. A merchant, or anything of that sort, was all the same: Still they did wonder at the artfulness she had displayed in keeping the truth concealed, and pretending to flirt with their poor brother, and trying it on everybody, in point of fact. Even that dear, witty, funny, clever Vivian Fauntleroy, she had tried it upon *him*, Helena Sparrowgrass declared, with a toss of her head. And though *she* had reason to know the attempt was a *complete failure*, still she must say she thought poor Mr. Behringbright would have a splendid catch of a wife, if he really meant to marry a woman who set her cap that way at every man she met with.

"I don't suppose she will leave it off, either, even when she has married that old fellow," said the eldest Miss Sparrowgrass, who was about, I think, thirty-seven years of age, but thought people would draw a much less inference when they heard her call a man of forty-two *old*.

But meanwhile the news spread, and everybody was seized with admiration and homage for the successful competitor—the drawer of the great prize in the matrimonial lottery. Nobody cared a bit whether Mr. Behringbright really was old, and bald, and dull, and grumpy in the temper—what not? He was a good match, a splendid match, a first-rate match. It was impossible for any girl to do better. She might live the life of a duchess if she pleased. No doubt she would have a house in Hyde Park. Mr. Behringbright had two country seats; she could give the grandest parties in town; and hearing that, the Miss Sparrowgrasses, even, moderated their clamours, and made up to the bride elect of a million of money. And thus was Madeleine herself more and more formally plighted to society to go through with her great enterprise; more and more yoked into the harness of her secret tremendous necessity; more and more engaged to her "world," to satisfy its expectations, as Camille Le Tellier was to his.

Last, but not least important, among these flattering and unconscious, but powerful, agents of destiny, figured Mr. Flamingo Brown. You would have thought some considerable portion of his immortal soul was at stake with this gentleman, in the successful prosecution of the "spec." in which he desired Mr. Behringbright's co-operation, so earnestly did he devote himself to maintaining the place he considered he had achieved in the favour of the lady in the ascendant. He had his own ideas still, no doubt—though somewhat modified—that there was some capital hoax in progress upon the credulity of Mr. Behringbright. He could not bring himself quite to disbelieve the Frenchman's innuendos, disproved as they seemed to be. But what was all that to him—what was any nation's, let alone individual's—happiness and prosperity to him—provided he could carry out a commercial speculation likely to end in a great profit to himself? And so he, too, entered himself emulously among the courtiers of the successful beauty; and though at times—especially after his second bottle of *chambertin* at dinner—his homage grew almost rudely and vulgarly

pointed and exclusive, Madeleine treated him with particular distinction and kindness, and attached him with almost every other word more firmly to her interests, by making him believe they were his own.

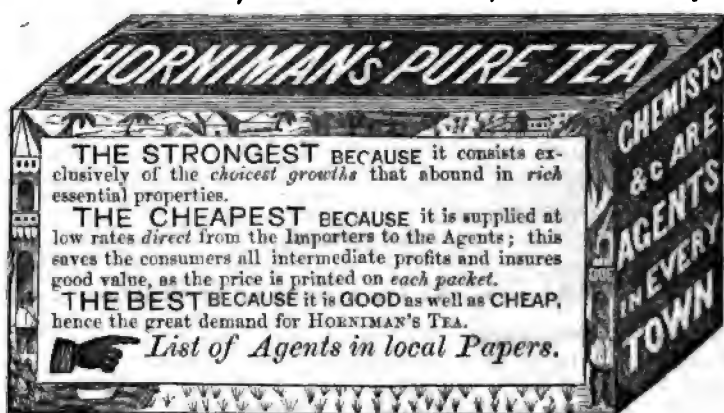
In other respects she bore her honours meekly. Indeed, people thought at times she seemed greatly more thoughtful and absent than usual. I am sure she did not hear repeatedly what the American said, though she showed her pearly teeth whenever he indulged in his loud, hoarse laugh over the excellent stories he told her of his many clever "strokes of business," which, to say truth, had most of them a strong touch of the filibuster or picaroon in them; but he evidently thought simply proofs of cleverness in his vocation. It is quite certain that she agreed with him he was in the right in his lawsuit with Mr. Behringbright about the Californian hides, which he related with the utmost diffuseness, railing at the judge as he went on for partiality against him; in spite of which, he said, the jury gave it in his favour, knowing "what trade was" themselves, much better than any judge in the land. But although she coincided in this opinion with such impartiality against her newly betrothed, Madeleine was not much to blame in that, for she did not know in what she agreed; she only knew, or thought, she was conciliating a dangerous foe.

Perhaps if she listened to anything really very much that evening in the after-dinner chat of the company, it was to a conversation which her aunt started in the midst of a select circle, agreeably to her favourite custom, on a religious topic. It was not a kind of discussion in which Madeleine Graham wontedly took much delight. She went to church in a proper family way, and heard Sir Orange read the Bible and prayers whenever, as head of the family, he was pleased to require such attendance; but she attached no particular ideas to anything of the sort she heard, thinking it was all very good and right, and all that, and sometimes that the preacher had a good or bad voice, a handsome or an indifferent physiognomy. But on this occasion Mrs. Bucktrout introducing the subject of predestination—*à propos* a doubt which she admitted herself to entertain whether Lord Glengariff was exactly in a state of preparedness for a call to the other world, in case his injuries should baffle the skill of his "medical attendant"—for perhaps the first time in her life Madeleine evidently lent "a serious and attentive ear" to all that was said on the topic. Inasmuch that Professor Doubleday, who also happened to have come to Killarney on a geological exploration, according to him, did her the unusual honour (science, also, did homage to success in money-clutching!) of inquiring her opinion on the subject.

Madeleine started at the question, but said, Yes; she was quite a predestinarian,—she believed people were forced to do things whether they liked or no; only she did not think people were punished for such a tremendous time as people thought, for doing what they could not help doing.

She said this in rather a quick, perhaps a little wild and strange way;

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AUBREY MARSTON

OR, A GAME OF SPECULATION.

CHAPTER XL.

RETREATING SOUTHWARDS.

"WHY did you steal away from us?" cried Constance, rushing forward as I entered the apartment, with extended arms and an expression of alarm and suspicion. "Where have you left Arthur?"

"Safe in his chamber, Constance. Fairfax feels fatigued, and wished for a little repose after the excitement in which we have just mingled; and the night air—"

"Yes; I knew how it would be," said Sir Charles, evidently displeased at the step we had taken without communicating with him,— "just as I suspected. The neighbourhood of these canals is not the place for an invalid. So I was quite right in my opinion about Venice; and again I say we must hasten our departure."

"But you should not leave Fairfax alone, if he is ill," cried Adela, in a tone of anxiety and interest.

I felt a consciousness of reproof at these words, and, by way of excuse, urged that we had both been carried away by the novelty of the scene.

The face of Constance had assumed a look of peculiar sadness, as if the relation in which she and Fairfax stood towards each other, still only as lovers, precluded her from proffering her assistance at such a moment.

"But he is now almost recovered," said I, assuringly. "It was only some sudden, unaccountable impulse which seized him, and the affection appears to have passed away as rapidly as it came. I have no doubt

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that a single night's rest will make a wonderful difference. Remember we have not all your high spirits, Constance."

"All this is very strange; you should not have stolen off," said she, reprovingly. "We should all have been so glad to have gone forth together."

"No; I must enter my protest," said Sir Charles, interfering. "I am resolved upon the step we shall take. The banks of these lagoons will not do for either you or Fairfax. The exhalations from the sea cannot but be noxious also to those in delicate health; and if I am to remain in Italy, I tell you frankly, Constance, I must have a more genial sky over my head. I don't care for architectural effects or fantastic shows. Besides, remember we have not undertaken our Continental voyage for nothing. But I must go and have a look at my young friend, and judge for myself."

In his absence I exhausted all my arguments to prove that Venice was not the place for our sojourn at that season, and that Sir Charles in any case must be obeyed. Adela readily seconded all my words; and I gave such a glowing description of the scenery and attractions of Naples, that Constance became interested, and seemed to forget her former impression, particularly as the sounds of revelry had now completely died away, and the lights had been nearly all extinguished, while the waters of the canal below appeared cold and cheerless in the glare of a solitary torch lighting up its surface as the last of the revellers proceeded to their homes.

For my own part, I was anxious to leave Venice without delay, after the strange statement Fairfax had persisted in making, that he had seen the face of Louise de Montfort in the crowd. The singular terror he had manifested on the occasion, the fears he had afterwards expressed lest he should again encounter her, produced a nervous anxiety in my own mind, which certainly proceeded from sympathy, and not from any sense of alarm. If Fairfax were right in his surmise, and he had really seen Louise in the company of Rushton, the feeling arising on my part would be simply that of contempt. My personal dislike of the man, my remembrance of the losses I had sustained, and the facility with which I had yielded myself up to his counsels,—all served to excite more than once a wish not to avoid, but to confront and accuse him. Not only was Rushton culpable in my eyes, but I viewed him now only as a man of broken fortunes, the utter failure of whose projects showed the shallowness of that judgment which I, with others, had mistaken for clear perception and superior talents.

Yet to hurry away from Venice at that moment, when we had only just set foot therein, seemed to be giving way to a confession of cowardice, suggested by the imaginary fears of Fairfax. To attempt, however, to reason with him, or to seek to infuse courage in his present condition, would have been not only useless, but unwise. His health, after all, was the first and most important consideration; and when the question was fully

debated next day, I supported the views of Sir Charles as to the necessity of immediately setting out for Naples.

Constance sighed, and complained, as might have been expected, at being torn away from a spot which had pleased her more than any place we had yet visited; though, when we rode out next day towards the Giudecca to take our last view of Venice, she was forced to admit that her first romantic impression had rapidly faded, and that the public buildings had a sad and depressing aspect when seen in the broad glare of noonday.

Next day we were tracing the upward current of the Brenta at a rapid rate, and were soon on the road to Florence.

"We have been flying from a shadow," said I to Fairfax, seeing him brighten up and become more cheerful as we got among the wild scenery of the Apennines, in the neighbourhood of Arqua.

"Shadow or substance," said he, with a shudder, "I do not desire to encounter such a shock again."

"Depend upon it, your imagination, heated with dwelling so long on the past, deceived you into a false idea. The sunshine and the air of Naples will enable us both to forget much."

"I trust so," said Fairfax, in a resigned voice. "We shall at least have quiet there, which may bring a new train of ideas."

Sir Charles had decided that we should make no longer stay at the usual places of resort on our journey southwards than was necessary to restore the invalids after their fatigue; he resolved, therefore, that we should embark at Leghorn for Naples, to avoid the inevitable exertion of a journey by land. A few hours were spent at Florence, in order to afford the girls a passing glimpse of the city and its environs. The evening air was already beginning to feel cold as we passed over the more elevated parts of the route, which served to make Sir Charles uneasy and impatient to arrive at our destination. When we came within sight of Leghorn, and caught a view of the blue expanse of the Mediterranean, he smiled encouragingly on Fairfax and Constance.

The arrangements of the voyage being chiefly left to me, I was up betimes next morning, with a view of making all the necessary preparations. The streets and canals of the city were silent and deserted; none of the shops had yet been opened, and the only sign of life which crossed my path in the grey of the morning was a long file of labourers engaged in cleansing the public way. By the clanking of a heavy chain, I at once recognized that I had come upon a gang of convicts. The sight was most repulsive and degrading to the Government who exhibited it. The stained yellow dresses of the malefactors, the large letters stamped upon their backs, indicating the nature of the crime of which they had been convicted, made me turn aside with a sense of loathing. On the back of one old man, whose hair was already white—probably from a lengthened confinement in the dungeons of Leghorn—I read the ominous sentence, "*Omicidio premeditato.*"

In fact, the gang was composed of the lowest order of criminals, who had been taken out for air and exercise by the *shirri*, who stood by with loaded muskets. It was not easy to escape without a petition for alms—a practice at which the police seemed to connive, as they made no objection to the gang barring the narrow passage by which I was about to proceed. Suddenly one of the criminals, in a dress of more gaudy yellow than the others, beckoned towards me, and pronounced my name; while his companions paused in their work, as if interested in what he had to say. The speaker doffed his cap, and bowed; and, in spite of the transformation produced by the closely cropped head and singular attire, I discovered, to my horror, the keen dark eye and expressive features of De Castro! Nor could I refrain, on the moment, from pronouncing the name of the ex-secretary aloud in token of recognition.

"*Amici, amici*," cried the gang, with evident interest in the discovery.

"I am again unfortunate," cried De Castro, in bitter accents and a broken voice. "I am falsely accused."

"*Come dice il briccone?*—What does the fellow say?" cried the malefactors in chorus.

"*Ch'egli e innocente*," answered the old man with the white locks, who happened somewhere to have picked up a little English.

"*Ch'egli e innocente?*" echoed the gang and *shirri* together, with a shout of derisive laughter, and the heavy chain rattled from end to end.

"*Ecco! ecco! non e sopra la dossa!*" exclaimed his near companion, pointing in mockery to the large black letters on a yellow ground.

Confounded at the revolting spectacle, I did not wait to ascertain for what crime the unfortunate De Castro had been committed to the dungeons of Leghorn, but turned away, struck with a feeling of disgust and even of horror.

"What!" I asked myself, "am I to be perpetually haunted under every sky with the image of my former follies, and to have ever before my eyes the reality of that period of my life which, of all others, I am most anxious to forget?"

We were soon again on the broad waters of the Mediterranean. The softness of the air revived Fairfax visibly. He chatted freely, and smiled upon Constance, who confessed that Italy became daily more beautiful in her eyes. Sir Charles, too, was in a high state of exhilaration at the thought of his project having succeeded, and our being at last within two days of our final destination.

But the countenance of Adela Wyndham, as often as I turned my gaze upon her, seemed to wear an expression of reproof, which caused a sinking at my heart. It was as if she had discovered the terrible secret which, for the last few months, had possessed me; and that, in spite of my efforts at concealment and affected gaiety, she half suspected I was only playing an equivocal part. Could I disguise from myself that I was even more

guilty than Fairfax in thus following up an intimacy with this high-souled and pure-minded girl, while a falsehood was lurking at my heart?

The hours hung heavily upon my spirits, in spite of the varied panorama that greeted the eye at every turn of the coast. I felt indisposed to give way to any expression of pleasure or enjoyment; and as we entered the noble sweep of the Bay of Naples, I wondered at the absence of that beauty which had impressed me with such vividness in former years. Alas! Italy was no longer the same to the seared consciences of Fairfax and myself.

CHAPTER XLI.

REST ON THE SHORES OF BALAE.

THE charm of southern Italy for a native of northern Europe consists not alone in the magical transformation of climate and the unrivalled beauty of the scenery. There is a source of inspiration in the consciousness of being among the relics of two extinct civilizations, which have here flourished side by side. The sense of worldly and personal interests is forgotten as the past becomes a reality to the imagination. We walk amidst a garden of tombs, suggestive not of sad, but of beautiful images; while a luxuriant Nature renews her offices as of old, and resuscitates in our breasts a portion of her own creative influence.

Naples has long been the favourite haunt of invalids. They live here as such beings can do nowhere else, entering without fatigue into the current of every-day enjoyment, and drinking in new life in a soft and exhilarating atmosphere. The glow of health and energy is often only a pleasing deception. Catching infection from the gay and volatile people around them, they fancy themselves strong enough to mingle with the crowd, whose only object seems to be to relieve the mind from a sense of care and *ennui*; as if, amidst the aspect of general decay, improvidence, or at least forgetfulness, was the highest and most suggestive philosophy. Whoever carries to such a land the memory of regret or despondency may at least hope to have the acuteness of his feelings mitigated; and if he cannot entirely forget the past, he will be ready to admit the obliterating influence of change of scene and novel associations.

The effect in a short period upon the mind of Fairfax was so marked, that Sir Charles spoke with confidence of his speedy restoration, and took credit to himself for the decision he had shown in taking leave of Venice so abruptly.

Fairfax, although still showing signs of that languor and abstraction which had never wholly abandoned him since his departure from England, joined us daily in all our excursions in the neighbourhood of Naples. When we chanced to be alone together, he could not entirely free himself

from the habit of making frequent allusions to the past; and although any mention of the names of Louise or Rushton was nominally forbidden, neither of us could entirely refrain from making some reference to the subject of our former intimacy.

A month's repose, however, had brought its natural relief, and I began to indulge the hope that Fairfax would cease to look upon his misdeeds with the exaggerated horror of an over-sensitive and remorseful spirit. Sitting together one day among the ruins scattered around the shores of Baïæ, watching the blue waves break upon the beach, my friend, who had been silent and abstracted all the morning, suddenly observed, in a tone of peculiar earnestness,—

"Whatever happens to me, Aubrey, remember Constance must know nothing of my past connection with Louise. Even were I to die to-morrow, it would be cruel to let her know the cause——" and he paused, as if overcome with a momentary sense of remorse.

"I thought you had begun to forget all this, Fairfax,—or at least you had given me the promise not to refer to the subject of Louise."

"I have merely made a passing observation," said he, thoughtfully. "Perhaps I was wrong. It is displeasing to you, and I will desist."

"Ah, I see whither your thoughts wander. You could open up the old wound which quiet and forgetfulness, I hoped, had almost healed."

"I have not forgotten anything," said Fairfax. "My memory is only less painful."

"But you must not brood over these remembrances. Let us be moving towards Sir Charles," said I, rising up and taking him by the hand. "See, the girls below are beckoning towards us. Let us join them; for I observe when you rest long in one place your countenance becomes more sad and thoughtful."

"Not so; you are mistaken. I often like to be alone and reflect." Then, after a pause, he asked, "Did not Constance say she would join us?"

"Yes, when they had made a circuit of the hill. It would have been more gallant on our part to have accompanied them to the ruins."

"Oh, I take little interest in the ruins," said Fairfax, vacantly. "Italy has lost its interest for me. Where did you say these remains were which have so much excited your interest?"

"There, on the margin of the coast-line. The foundations you may observe rising out of the water. I fancy the sea must have encroached from some volcanic disturbance."

"What a devoted girl has Constance become!" said Fairfax, in his abstracted way, without heeding my remark. "How much she seems to have improved during our short stay here! So happy, too."

"Yes, she seems indeed charmed with everything; and not the least at seeing your rapid recovery, Fairfax."

"Kind Constance!" said he, sympathizingly, and heaving a deep sigh; "she does indeed seem to enjoy it. Would that I could say the same! but all here seems no longer as of old, Aubrey; and I fear I can only exist upon memories; but, remember, whatever happens, Sir Charles must know nothing of this connection. My conduct, perhaps, is not blameless; but the strange passion of this woman—the persistence with which she has clung to me from the first moment of our acquaintance—has been my bane. How can I hope to satisfy Constance, when the secret is to be revealed, without appearing worthless and deceitful in her eyes? She will withdraw her affection from me," said Fairfax, mournfully, "and then I shall be alone."

"No, Arthur; believe me, her affection increases for you hourly. Constance will make a devoted wife, and can overlook anything for your sake."

But while I offered this consolation, my heart bled secretly for Constance Wyndham; for I had a presentiment that her ministering sympathy and attachment were not destined to be crowned by an enduring happiness. I could not help observing that there was still a lingering fondness for Louise, which, perhaps, nothing but death could eradicate. But it was my duty at that moment to administer words of comfort and encouragement.

"Bear up," said I; "you will forget all this. Already you are much restored."

"But have I not been unjust,—yes, doubly unjust?" he asked, eagerly, falling into one of his abstracted fits. "How changed! What an expression of agony! Did you observe her sad, wasted look as she turned her eyes upon me? It withered up my heart!"

"You are cheating yourself by a phantom. Have you not already told me that you had succeeded in discarding these false impressions?"

"No; not the impression, only the painfulness of the memory. I can never dismiss from my mind the conviction of having seen Louise and Rushton on that remarkable evening of our stroll in Venice. Is it possible he should have found his way to the Continent?"

"Hush!" said I, interrupting him. "Remember the promise you gave me never to recur to that subject. See, here are our friends ascending the hill to join us. I fear they will consider us strangely remiss in indulging in these conversations apart. Compose your agitation; it will alarm Sir Charles."

The next moment Constance sprung forward, bearing in her hand a bouquet of wild flowers, which she had gathered among the ruins below, exclaiming, as she offered them to Fairfax,—

"Look here, Arthur; what do you think of my morning's labour?"

Fairfax cast his eyes upon the flowers for a moment, and said, in a sad tone,—

"I fear they will soon fade, and only prove too truly an emblem of what they have lately adorned."

"But I mean to put them in my hair," cried Constance,—"*or at least to get you to do that for me;*" and she playfully took a seat upon the green turf beside him, while Fairfax proceeded languidly to select the flowers one by one, and to rearrange them in a wreath of his own design.

"What strange, inquisitive sort of people our country people are abroad!" said Sir Charles, who just now joined us. "They allow us no privacy, and seem determined to criticize your labours, Fairfax. For the last half-hour an English gentleman and his wife have been hovering around us, and are now taking observations from yonder rock. They really seem vastly interested in our movements. If they would only approach, perhaps we should find them very companionable people. For my own part, I had a strong idea of giving them a gentle intimation."

I turned my eyes in the direction indicated by Sir Charles, and saw two figures standing on the most elevated point of the ground above us. A strange, undefined suspicion flashed across me at the moment, and I was about to draw the attention of Fairfax to the pair, who still persisted in gazing fixedly upon us for a few moments, and then moved rapidly out of sight.

The chaplet of flowers was now completed, and Fairfax rose with a smile, as if pleased at the result of his taste. Constance took the proffered gift from the hands of her betrothed; Sir Charles smiled, whispered in my ear that he had not seen Fairfax look so well for the last two months, and drew me aside to consult me as to our return to England. How nervously my heart beat at that moment at the thought of home!

CHAPTER XLII.

LOUISE'S REVENGE.

A FEW months, and spring began to show itself again in all the richness of teeming vegetation. The increased temperature became so marked, that, with the exception of Fairfax, we had all declared for another change of scene. He, however, was singularly reconciled to his present position, and indisposed to move from the enticing locality of Naples. In truth, as the period fixed for our departure approached, Fairfax showed a marked reluctance to return to England. Yet he was no longer consumed by former regrets; and when our conversation turned on the past, it was to revert to the pleasant incidents and freaks of his boyish days. Sometimes he spoke of the probable condition of the Stoneleigh Down hunt, or the fate of the Hampton Severn bank, and trusted that old Silverthorne, at

most, had escaped the consequences of the failure which had ruined hundreds.

Still there was an evident effort in all his attempts to give way to the spirit of enjoyment. His smile was sadness itself, and although his eye shone with natural brightness at times, its expression seemed to have acquired an increased character of vacancy of late.

The fête of the Corpus Domini was at hand. The streets of Naples were unpleasantly thronged by a vast concourse of people from the various districts around; and Sir Charles proposed, in order to avoid the bustle and excitement which that event produced among the inhabitants, to retire for a few days to country quarters. We arranged, therefore, for a small *casino* near Castel-à-Mare, as it afforded a good station for boating excursions, to which Fairfax had lately become peculiarly partial, as they enabled him to enjoy the air and scenery without suffering from the feeling of fatigue. Sometimes we were joined by Adela and Constance, Sir Charles, for the most part, contenting himself with remaining indoors during the morning, absorbed in the English newspapers, his lengthened absence having increased his homesickness, even to indulging in occasional fits of testiness.

One day Fairfax and I started on an excursion round the island of Capri, which, under ordinary circumstances, occupied the space of a day. He had become almost querulous in his constant desire of change and novelty, and seemed to take greater pleasure in being alone with me in these solitary excursions, than when he enjoyed the society of Sir Charles and his daughters.

The wind was not favourable for the trip,—the weather ominously threatening, and heavy clouds hung overhead. Fairfax, however, continued to persist in his desire of accomplishing the voyage; and after beating up to windward through a heavy sea for several hours, we at last found shelter at the back of the island.

The hour was late, and after a brief refreshment the boatmen urged the necessity of pushing off without further delay. As we got on board, heavy drops of rain began to fall. The sky became more overcast, and the wind increased to a gale. Being sheltered, however, by the high ridge of the rock of Capri, we were not aware of the sea with which we were now to contend, until fairly under weigh. The wind, too, had again shifted, and blew directly in our teeth. Sudden and fearful gusts, peculiar to this shore, swept over us, threatening to upset the galley, which shipped a tremendous sea. A deluge of rain poured down, accompanied by sharp peals of thunder, which reverberated overhead. I now began to entertain some symptoms of alarm for the result of our ill-timed excursion, particularly when I heard the low mutterings of the crew calling on their saints for help, and watched their devout gesticulations with each flash of lightning.

When I glanced at Fairfax to discover how he fared, I saw that he sat

silent and apathetic in the stern of the boat, up to the ankles in water, wrapped in his great-coat, which, however, afforded no protection against the storm. His face wore the livid hue of death, and his limbs trembled from the effects of exposure and fatigue. The wind, however, suddenly abated, though the torrents of rain increased, and we were enabled to make our landing-place with difficulty in the darkness of the night.

Fairfax, benumbed in all his limbs, was unable to rise without assistance; and while I was consoling myself on having narrowly escaped the perils of the sea, I could not help feeling that, in his delicate state, the consequences of exposure to many hours of wind and rain in an open boat might be serious, if not fatal. Sir Charles, as might be supposed, was in consternation at our lengthened absence, and next morning I came in for a severe reprimand, as Fairfax confessed himself indisposed to rise at his usual hour. The accident likewise caused us some disappointment regarding an excursion to Pæstum, which we had meditated as a wind-up to our stay on the shores of southern Italy. This trip, from being postponed, was finally abandoned; and Sir Charles, finding that Fairfax was slowly recovering, at last fixed a day for our ultimate departure.

It was a glorious evening at the close of May. The heat of the day had confined us within doors, and we had all gone forth a short distance from our country house to enjoy the breeze on an elevated ridge of broken ground, under the shelter of a thick grove of olive trees. The countenance of Fairfax wore a smile of peculiar happiness. He was talking of our homeward journey, and in his absent manner was playfully twining the tresses of Constance, which fell in rich masses under the broad shade of her hat. Adela had brought her sketch-book, and was pencilling the outline of the bay and islands; and I was myself reclining by her side, occasionally pointing out some little additions which she proposed to work in on the morrow, as the twilight was then rapidly falling.

"Sad to think of leaving such a land!" said Adela, closing the sketch-book; "but I long to see dear old Hurstfield again. I suppose we shall find everybody and everything so changed."

"And I fear changed for the worse, too," said Sir Charles. "Things never went right yet when absent from our own fireside. I never thought I should find Italy so monotonous. All my feeling of novelty expired with the first week."

"And mine is still as fresh as ever," cried Constance.

"And I could be content to linger here, too, some time longer," said Fairfax, with an appealing look at Sir Charles. "I have not felt the heat in the least oppressive."

Sir Charles gave me a significant look at this remark, and then added, in a quick, decisive tone,—

"No, no. Two days more, and we shall be again afloat, and steering for Old England."

Fairfax seemed to sigh as these words were pronounced, for his

indisposition to leave Italy had been more than once privately expressed to myself, and I half suspected the cause. Constance seemed to sympathize on all occasions with his feelings, and now began to entreat for another short respite. But her father was inexorable; and we were talking over the new sources of occupation we should find at home, as a visitor of singular appearance advanced towards the circle where we were seated. His dress, although mean and tawdry, had still something picturesque and striking, and the brilliant colours made one forget the poverty of his general aspect. In one hand he bore a guitar, over the strings of which he carelessly threw his fingers, and, without waiting to be invited, broke forth into a wild national air, expressive of sadness and passionate feeling.

The suddenness of his approach, the effect of a voice singularly musical, though wild and piercing, arrested our attention, and we suffered him to proceed to the close without interruption. Fairfax seemed especially touched with the lay; and when the improvisatore had concluded, he asked eagerly, in Italian,—

“Are you the composer of the aria, my friend?”

The singer shook his head, and replied, with a smile which displayed a brilliant row of teeth, “*E l'aria contadina*. I have many more of the same. Perhaps your adorable young lady would like to hear another?”

“No, no,” said Sir Charles, waving off the singer with one hand, and with the other feeling in his pocket for some coin. “The adorable young lady is quite satisfied.—Now, Constance, your largess, and let the man go his way.”

“Poor wanderer!” said Constance, sympathetically. “His strain sounds mournfully. Perhaps he has been a sufferer,” added she, fixing her eyes on Fairfax.

“May the poor zingara venture to offer his praises to the soft-eyed queen of loveliness?” said the minstrel, advancing towards Adela, and making a studied obeisance.

“We have had quite enough of all this,” said Sir Charles, shaking his head at the singer.

The gipsy, however, still lingered, as if disappointed at not being allowed either to tell the fortunes or hymn the praises of the ladies; and, running his fingers again over the instrument, struck into a lay even more sad in character than the previous one. Fairfax again became singularly abstracted. The strange gesture of the singer, the wild intonation and the general melancholy which pervaded the performance, had evidently awakened in his memory some painful remembrance. His countenance was unnaturally excited; his eyes shone with an ecstatic expression; and as I gazed upon his face, the lines came out sharp and clear as the last rays of the setting sun fell upon his profile.

I felt a sudden sinking of the heart, and became oppressed with the consciousness that my hopes were about to receive an ominous shock, and

that this momentary gleam, like the flickering of a dying lamp, was only the certain presage of death.

While my eyes thus rested upon the wasted countenance of Fairfax, two figures emerged from the olive grove behind us, and appeared to be approaching the spot where we were seated. As they continued slowly to advance, curiosity naturally led us all to raise our eyes towards them. Twilight had now set in, and it was not possible to discern distinctly the features of the pair until within a few yards distant. Moreover, the lady who hung on the arm of her companion was closely veiled, and attired in a habit in all respects resembling that of one of the religious orders.

Fairfax had again playfully displaced one of the long tresses in which Constance had arranged her hair, and was gazing affectionately into her face, when the two figures, instead of passing on, hesitated for a moment, as if in doubt, and then walked directly into the midst of our circle. Sir Charles stared at the intruders, and Fairfax raised his heavy eyes in the same direction. I sprang instinctively to my feet, to demand the cause of so unseemly an interruption, when a harsh but familiar voice exclaimed aloud,—

“It is they!”

I drew back a few paces in astonishment at the discovery, and endeavoured to muster all my energy, as if for an effort of resistance, as my eye fell upon the stern features of Sir Bedford Rushton, who, without further parley, darted a withering look at the bewildered Fairfax, and, raising the white veil of the lady in the sombre garb, exposed to view the wasted countenance of Louise de Montfort!

What a change! The features of that once lovely woman bore the trace not of months, but of long years of grief and suffering. Her beauty was a wreck. Premature age had set its indelible seal upon that now shrunk form, whose faultless mould had been the type of womanhood and grace. I watched the head of Fairfax drop upon his breast with a heavy sigh. Suddenly he made a slight effort to rise, stretched forth his arm mechanically towards Louise, and then fell back on the turf insensible.

Constance screamed aloud at the sight, and clung to her lover; while Sir Charles and Adela looked in eager alarm towards me for an explanation. In the suddenness of my surprise my presence of mind utterly forsook me, and I tottered back to a tree for support.

“It is enough,” said Louise, in a meek voice, her eyes streaming over. “I have now had my last wish. Take me away. Fairfax,” she cried, in broken and hollow accents, gazing down at the lifeless form of Arthur, as he lay grasping the turf with both his hands, while Constance clung trembling to him, as it were, for protection,—“farewell, Arthur Fairfax; your injustice may have broken my spirit, but cannot recall our vows!”

A pang of remorse shot through me as Louise uttered these last words. The resigned gentleness of her manner, the tone of her voice, and the look of despairing affection which she cast upon Fairfax, seemed to throw a new light on past transactions. Again I condemned the unfeeling conduct of my friend; my unworthy suspicions vanished, and I considered Louise a martyr victim.

I rushed forward to assist Fairfax, and, removing Constance from her position, placed my hand upon his breast. I chafed his temples, and called aloud for assistance. His eye was glazed, and fixed on vacancy; I could not feel his heart beat; the sudden shock had overpowered him. The spirit of Arthur Fairfax had fled!

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE LOST FRIEND.

THAT was a terrible and trying moment for myself. I feared to look up from the face of my dead friend and encounter the eye of Sir Charles, who knelt by the side of Constance, and vainly sought to revive her. In the confusion of so many conflicting emotions, I never thought of what had become of those whose sudden presence had brought about this terrible visitation, until they were out of sight. Then, with the impotent rage of one who had lost all self-control, I rushed madly in the direction I fancied they had taken, and incoherently cried aloud for justice. My search was vain, and I found myself a mile distant, stumbling over a heap of ruins in the stillness of the night, when a servant of Sir Charles came, and urged me earnestly to return to the Casino; "Sir Charles was distracted, and Miss Constance had gone off into one fainting fit after another, so that the doctor despaired of her life."

I made an effort to be calm, and followed the messenger homeward. My conduct had been singular and inexplicable in thus leaving my friend and flying off in pursuit, and I felt that the time had at last arrived when a full confession of my past relations with Sir Bedford could no longer be deferred.

I found Adela in tears, and Sir Charles standing with folded arms by the couch of Constance, who appeared to be in a deep slumber, as her short, heavy breathing sounded through the stillness of the chamber. An English physician had been procured, and was in attendance. As I entered, he was gazing upon the sleeper with a grave, constrained expression, as if striving to disguise the real nature of his feelings.

Sir Charles gave me a stern, severe look as soon as I caught his eye, and raised his finger to his lips in token of silence, while the tears of Adela continued to flow.

"There is no present danger," said the physician, in a whisper, "nor

is it necessary that I should now remain longer. Half an hour's repose will enable her to be removed to her own chamber, and the sleeping draught can be taken as soon as she wakes, and the dose repeated if nervous symptoms again set in."

Constance awoke from a refreshing slumber. Adela, regardless of personal inconvenience, had watched throughout the night her bedside, with the affection of a devoted sister. Her first inquiry was, why these many tokens of a sick chamber were around her?—why she was not abroad, seeing the sunshine stream so temptingly through the darkened windows? Then, with a sudden recurrence to the past, she inquired, with a look of alarm, whether she had been dreaming.

"Yes, she must have had a fearful dream. She felt as though she had just escaped from the terrors of a strange vision. Fairfax and she had returned to England, and were about to be united at the altar. Everything had been prepared for a private marriage; but suddenly a wild figure had rushed in and forbidden the banns—a careworn creature, attired like one of the gipsies who haunt Hurstfield." "That is all I remember. But the vision oppressed me for hours, and lingers upon me like a nightmare. Tell me, did I dream or no?" asked Constance, in a voice of anxiety.

Adela turned away her head at the sight, and begged her to rest quiet only for a few hours,—that Sir Charles wished it.

"Ah! it is no dream, I fear," cried Constance, sinking back with a sense of wearied apprehension. "Do not deceive me," she added, looking wildly round the chamber. "What has become of this strange creature? I must have seen her face before. Did not Arthur swoon when she approached him? Oh yes; he stretched out his arms, and fell back. Ah! it is no dream," said Constance, bursting into tears.

"Compose yourself, my dear sister," said Adela, bending over the invalid beseechingly. "See, here is a kind friend come to visit you," as the doctor advanced to the bedside of the astonished Constance, and gently shook her hand.

"You are better, my dear young lady,—much better.—No ground for alarm," he said aloud, when he had felt her pulse. "The draught has done wonders.—You are much better," he repeated, addressing the patient with an encouraging smile; "in fact, I don't see what I can do further. Air and exercise,—air and exercise."

Adela again bent over the couch of her sister, and explained the nature of the assurance given by the physician, between whom and Sir Charles a few words passed. The former was apologizing for his late arrival on that morning, by the fact of a sudden requisition having been made upon him just when he was about to set out.

"Singular affair," said Dr. Paxton to me, as I met him coming forth from the chamber of Constance, "very singular occurrence; similar state of nervous agitation and excitement, except that in this case the patient

had swallowed a dose of poison, which it seems she had kept by her for the last twelve months."

"A dose of poison?" I repeated, with a stare of surprise.

"Yes; a drachm or so of aconite, enough to have killed two strong men, had it not lost its virtue by careless keeping. It only threw her into a state of stupefaction, and she is now fast recovering."

"The name?" I eagerly demanded, as a suspicion flashed across me.

"The name?—really I have forgotten the name of the lady in the hurry of the moment; but that she was English I am certain, though a Catholic, and destined, I understood, for one of the religious houses in Italy. Let me see; here is the name of the gentleman who called me in," said the doctor, consulting his note-book; "Sir Bedford—"

"And she still lives?" I interrupted, before he had completed his sentence, and taking him suddenly by the arm.

"Oh yes; the lady is progressing favourably, and I suppose is fated to go into one of these graves for the living. Sad fate for women, sir; quite a mistake. Poor thing! she fancied, of course, that she carried an antidote about with her as a last resource, in the event of being forced to take the veil."

Here was another shock to fill me with sadness and wonder. Events seemed to follow upon each other with a singular connection, as if the destinies of two beings had, from the first hour of their intercourse, been subjected to some supernatural influence, which crushed them by a swift and certain retribution. This concealment of poison about the person of Louise explained the strange bodings and involuntary confessions in which she indulged. She was evidently an unhappy fatalist, who carried about with her in secret the consciousness of an irresistible propensity to self-murder; a woman destitute of all higher moral education; a creature of headlong passions and unscrupulous intents.

I shall not attempt to dissemble the agony we suffered in endeavouring to conceal from the unhappy Constance the fate of Arthur. The saint-like devotion of Adela shone out like a star in trouble, infusing into the mind of the sufferer a comfort and assurance which never faltered. Her strength of mind triumphed where others would have despaired of the possibility of affording consolation.

Sir Charles, with natural delicacy, forbore questioning me at that moment as to the motive of Sir Bedford's sudden appearance in Italy; but I saw that he regarded me no longer with that indulgent confidence which he had formerly bestowed. But my persistence in concealment was only making matters worse, and I resolved, as a matter of duty, to delay no longer in making a full confession of my misdeeds, and disclosing the fatal secret which had suddenly bereft me of a friend, and filled our house with mourning.

EARTHQUAKES.

THE slight shock—it was no more—experienced on the 6th of last month in England, chiefly towards the west, has set many people thinking about earthquakes : causing some of us to question in our own minds the appropriateness of the words “terra firma.” In astronomical and meteorological establishments of observation, wherein special instruments are set up to accomplish the automatic registration of earthquake disturbances, however slight, indications of these phenomena, even here at home, are common enough ; but earthquake shocks of sufficient intensity to make themselves manifest generally to the unaided senses, even by night, are in these islands rare. Notwithstanding the comparative infrequency of earthquakes here in these isles, I believe the point will be generally acceded to by scientific men of all parts, that an Englishman,—or rather, an Irishman,—Mr. Robert Mallet, the engineer of monster mortar celebrity, has done more towards elucidating the theory of earthquakes than any one who had preceded him. This being so, we cannot do better than accept this gentleman’s hypothesis of earthquakes for our guidance. What that hypothesis is shall be stated presently ; but meanwhile, and preparatively, it may be well to observe, that the labours of Mr. Mallet have been much facilitated by the general study of wave propagation since the commencement of the present century ; chiefly induced by the necessities of the undulatory or wave theory of light. Within certain limits of expression, unnecessary to be specified in this place, the general law of wave propagation is identical, whatever the undulatory medium ; and thus it has happened, that considerations relative to the undulations of the attenuated ether, from the wave pulsations of which light is assumed to result, have found a direct and immediate application to those grosser waves of our planet’s superficial crust, which probably constitute the phenomena of earthquakes. We say “probably,” not to be more dogmatic than our guide and teacher, the limiting adverb being used by Mr. Mallet himself. “There is every reason to believe that an earthquake,” writes that gentleman, “is simply the transit of a wave of elastic compression in any direction to horizontality, in any azimuth, through the surface and crust of the earth, from any centre of impulse or from more than one, which may be attended with tidal and sound waves, dependent upon the impulse, and upon circumstances of position as to sea and land.” “This truth,” our earthquake authority goes on to say, “has not been fully and experimentally demonstrated, but it is nevertheless in the highest degree probable.” There is full reason to believe that no single spot of the earth’s surface exists that has not been subject to earthquake disturbances ; but certain regions have from time immemorial acquired a bad notoriety in this particular, and almost—if not absolutely without exception,—they are volcanic regions. This coincidence being well established, the assumption was based upon it that volcanic

action is not merely the usual, but the only cause of earthquakes: an assumption, however, that may lead us beyond the truth.

The strata of which the crust of our planet is made up have been so shaken about from time to time in the course of long geological ages, that in the aggregate, they admit of comparison to the materials of some vast arched edifice once disturbed, and left in a strained condition, awaiting what builders call "a new set." It may happen that either through degradation, decomposition, through the disturbance of gravitation, or centrifugal force, some part of the arch gives way. The result of this would be, primarily, a local surface disturbance; secondarily, transmission of disturbance by undulatory motion, according to the usual laws of wave distribution.

There is no sort of motion more common than wave motion; but if the waves of water be excepted, and the undulations which skim over fields of uncut corn, waves are either too small for direct recognition by the eye, or they occur in media which are invisible. In the consideration of any sort of wave, two primary conditions are necessary to be kept in view;—namely, size of the wave, or volume of displaced particles in motion at any one time; and amplitude of excursion, or extent of travelling. The size of a wave depends on the elastic limits of any given material thrown into undulations, and the amount or power of original impulse: by the "amplitude of its excursion" we mean the surface over which the wave travels.

Applying these deductions to the case of earthquake phenomena, it will be found that the common phases of earthquakes are susceptible of illustration. Very rarely does it happen that an earthquake consists of only one shock or manifestation of wave disturbance; more generally the occurrence of a succession of shocks has been noted, the whole accompanied by a rushing or rumbling sound. Consideration of the laws of wave transmission affords a plausible explanation of this. To cite an illustrative case, let it be assumed that an observer stands upon the iron rail laid *in situ* on a railway line, and that the rail at some distance away be struck. Under these circumstances, the observer will be made cognizant of three distinct wave impulses at least, it may be even more. The first impulse will be conveyed along the iron of the rail, the second through the earth, and the third, being the sound impulse, will come through the air. If what we have generalized, calling it "the earth," should happen to be composed of different mineral strata, then each stratum might have a separate limit of elasticity, and would, therefore, be endowed with a separate velocity of wave transmission.

Though it be compatible with our fullest information concerning earthquakes to assume that they may occur independently of volcanic action, nevertheless, the superior frequency and intensity of earthquake phenomena in neighbourhoods of high volcanic energy points unmistakably to some connection between the two. Concerning volcanoes themselves there is great difference of opinion. Some geologists believe the central parts of the earth—all but a comparatively thin crust, in point of fact—to

be a mass of molten fire; basing their opinion upon observations relative to successive increments of heat recognized in proportion as shafts and the borings of Artesian wells are driven lower. Starting from this point of contemplation, the entire terrestrial crust may be assimilated to the surface of a quagmire, molten fire being substituted for water; and volcanoes will be comparable to apertures in the quagmire crust, up which liquid contents have been spurted from time to time, and become consolidated into the form of hollow, perforate, truncated cones. Other geologists do not believe in this hypothesis of a central molten mass, and of course have to find another explanation of volcanic phenomena.

In 1857 Mr. Mallet investigated with much care the conditions of the Neapolitan earthquake of that year, than which none greater had occurred since 1783. He came to the conclusion, as the result of these investigations, that the primary impulse, whatever it might have been, originated at no greater depth than $5\frac{1}{2}$ geographical miles, or 16,705 feet. Geologists, who believe in a central molten mass, require, in order to accord with their data, a superficial crust of some 800 miles thick: obviously, then, if Mr. Mallet's deductions concerning the depth of focus of the Neapolitan earthquake of 1857 be correct, and if the molten condition of our planet only begins at a depth of 800 miles, there could have been no immediate connection between the two.

Acceding to this conclusion, it is nevertheless legitimate to assume the state of a central molten mass, and a floating superimposed crust, for the purpose of illustration: inasmuch as—earthquake phenomena regarded—the earth's surface may be assumed as plane, not convex, a portion of terrestrial crust may be assimilated to a sheet of india-rubber floated upon some yielding material. If a small mine of gunpowder were to be lodged between the rubber and liquid material, then ignited, the resulting impulse would be comparable to the focus of an earthquake disturbance, in whatever cause originating. Under the conditions specified, although the explosion might be restricted to one spot, the perturbations would be general. The rubber would pulse and undulate, being thrown into waves. Owing to the natural toughness of caoutchouc, rupture of this material would be hardly possible. Substitute a thin sheet of clay for india-rubber, the probability of rupture would be greater; but disintegration would undoubtedly ensue if the clay's tenacity were sufficiently diminished by mingling it with sand.

Contemplating earthquake phenomena from this point of view, the various ways in which the earth's surface has been affected at different times are readily explicable. Whether a mere wavy undulation of variable extent shall result, or an actual cracking and gaping of the earth, as occurred in Calabria during the great earthquake of 1783, will depend on the relations subsisting between the violence of first effort and the more or less yielding nature and the elastic limits of the strata affected.

Geologists attribute vast cosmical modifications to the agency of

earthquakes, such as the uprise of table land or mountain, thousands of miles in superficial area, and the downfall of what was high land sunk into a valley. These speculations seem wild and overstrained at first, but if the records of certain modern and well-attested earthquakes be consulted, the aspect of improbability vanishes. Even a study of the Calabrian earthquake records of 1783, though the phenomena were comparatively by no means stupendous, will tend much to abate the scepticism.

Calabria is a small region, and, for volcanic activity, with energy of associated earthquake phenomena, it sinks into insignificance by comparison with many other volcanic tracts,—notably that of the Andes. Yet in Calabria the results of the great earthquake of 1783 will seem tremendous beyond all previous conception to all such minds as have not contemplated earthquake phenomena from a geological point of view. Before specifying these Calabrian phenomena, it is well to remark that the testimony in respect of them is, perhaps, more clear and better attested than in any parallel case. The Neapolitan Government despatched various scientific men and artists into the disturbed region, to take cognizance of every remarkable earthquake phenomenon, to furnish the Government with drawings and charts—in short, to place on record every available particular for the guidance of future inquirers. The Neapolitan delegates acquitted themselves well. Hitherto earthquake records had been for the most part limited to a statement of the number of lives lost, and of miraculous rescues achieved. The prominent object with writers had been to recite a thrilling tale from very sufficient materials. The thralldom of affright had invested phenomena wonderful enough naturally with elements of the marvellous that did not properly belong to them. The Calabrian records are free from this characteristic. They set forth so deliberately and soberly the effects noticed, that the testimony bears that impress of veracity so hard to explain, yet so easy to appreciate.

Throughout the Calabrian region in 1783, a series of earthquake disturbances on, geologically speaking, a small scale, but amply suggestive of those larger phenomena of a similar kind described by geologists, occurred. It is on record that whole vineyards and olive groves slid away, and were deposited miles distant. Many a proprietor of what had been to him a barren waste, dusting from his eyes a veil of fine ashes—clouds of which had darkened the heavens for a season, and hung over the earth like a pall,—looked around him, and found that, because of the earthquake, he had grown a rich man. So profound was the change of feature, so extensive the shifting, that the Chevalier Deodat de Dolomieu, who describes the result, bids the reader to feign the case of plates of clay laid upon a table in several loose layers, and the table continuously struck at one edge with mallet blows. Under the conditions specified, the degree of shifting of one clay plate over another may readily be imagined,—the breaking of some, the opening of chasms, the disappearance of what-

ever had stood over these now yawning crevasses. It is recorded how the earth, cracking suddenly, and opening like a gigantic mouth, engulfed whole tenements, then closed with a thunderous clap, like the snapping of the teeth of some Titan. It is recorded that, the shock over, when people dug down to exhume some treasured mortal remains, the latter were found closely bedded in the earth, hard pressed like a rock, no evidence of the way in which they got there existing.

Relative to the destruction of human and animal life by earthquakes, this has mostly happened by the downfall of edifices, or the sudden upheaving and inrush of a tremendous ocean wave; nevertheless, many examples are on record of extensive animal destruction, the result of direct engulfment. The number of individuals who perished from the Calabrian earthquake of 1783 is estimated by Hamilton as about forty thousand, and about twenty thousand more died by epidemics caused by insufficient nourishment, exposure to the atmosphere, and malaria arising from new and stagnant lakes and pools. Most of the immediate deaths resulted from burying under the ruins of houses, but many were burned to death in conflagrations. At Oppida these fires raged more than elsewhere, because of immense magazines of olive oil there present.

Dolomieu visited Messina after the shock of February 5th, and found the city still standing, inasmuch as the shock had not affected Sicily in any high degree. "But when I passed over to Calabria," he wrote, "and first beheld Polistena, the scene of horror almost deprived me of my faculties; my mind was filled with mingled compassion and terror." Nothing had escaped; all was levelled with the dust! Not a single house or piece of wall remained; on all sides were heaps of stones, so destitute of form that they gave no conception of there ever having been a town on the spot. A horrible stench arose from the dead bodies. He conversed with many persons who had been buried for three, four, even five days, and then rescued. He questioned them respecting their sensations, and they agreed that of all the physical evils endured thirst was the most intolerable, and that their mental agony was increased by the idea that they were abandoned by their friends. About a fourth part of the inhabitants of Polistena were buried alive, and might have been saved but for want of hands. It frequently happened that persons in search of those most dear to them could hear their moans, could recognize their voices:—were certain of the spot where their friends lay buried, but could render no assistance. At Terranuova four Augustine monks had taken refuge in a vaulted sacristy, the arch of which, only broken in part, continued to support a vast pile of ruins. They made their cries heard for four days and nights, but without avail. Only one of the brethren was saved, and his individual strength availed little to move the cumbering ruin. Gradually their voices died away, and were heard no more.

Some idea of the occasional amplitude of earthquake land-waves may be gathered from the testimony of Flint the geographer, who collated

evidence of the violent earthquake that devastated South Carolina in 1812. The forest adjacent to New Madrid presented, subsequent to the disturbance, a singular scene of confusion, the trees standing inclined in every direction, their tops matted and interlaced. When Sir Charles Lyell was travelling in this region, in March, 1846, Mr. Bringier, an engineer of New Orleans, stated that being on horseback near New Madrid when some of the severest shocks were experienced, he saw that as the waves advanced the trees bent down, and the next instant, while recovering their position, they often met the tops of trees similarly inclined, and were prevented righting themselves again. Accepting this testimony as reliable, the mind rises to a conception of the awful grandeur of rending and crashing sounds that must have roused the solitudes of these dense primeval forests. Eye-witnesses relate that the earth upheaved in great undulations; that when these reached a certain height the soil burst, discharging large volumes of water, sand, and pitcoal, as high as the tree-tops. It was a peculiarity of this earthquake that the land opened in cracks and trenches at frequent intervals during a considerable period. Down those fissures men and animals often disappeared, to emerge no more. There seemed no way by which the ingenuity of man could elude the bite of these treacherous jaws, until the people noticed the fissures to open in the direction of S.W. to N.E. The scared and houseless people began to profit by the fact, by turning the prostrate timber to account. They ranged long trees across the direction of the fissures; by which, so often as a crevice yawned, and its breadth was not greater than the length of some spanning tree, the latter by its trunk and spreading branches offered a chance of escape.

Had it been my intention in this paper to extend the list of human and animal destruction accomplished by earthquakes, and of which records have been handed down, to the widest limits possible, the result would have been a death-roll impressive for its magnitude, but wearisome because of its sameness. The most profitable issue of investigations touching earthquake phenomena is to dissipate the notion that they are special and infrequent visitations, and to make manifest the part they perform in effecting those geological changes which, though terrible to existing generations, may be beneficial to futurity.

Looking at the world as one cosmos or macrocosm, contemplating it apart from those ideas of patriotism which make each of us hold to the land of his birth or adoption as a land to be favoured specially to the end of doom, the mind then rises to the conception of a Deity willing that, before our planet melts into the chaos whence it came, each superficial spot shall have its turn of ruin and reinstatement, activity and repose; we can conceive that the hot Sahara may not be destined ever to remain a barren waste, or our own green fields ever verdant.

This earth of ours is not at rest. Forces are locked up within, as fiery-tongued volcanoes make known, and quivering earthquakes. Of how much, earthquakes in their wilder movements can do, this small quivering

of October the 6th gives but a faint idea. Now it is well that some of us should realize what earthquakes are known to have done since the beginning of the present century; and to the end of making this apparent, I cannot do better than end this paper with a quotation from Sir Charles Lyell :—

“ Before we leave the consideration of earthquakes already enumerated (*i. e.*, of the 19th century),” writes he, “ let us pause for a moment, and reflect how many remarkable facts of geological interest are afforded by the earthquakes above described, though they constitute but a small part of the convulsions even of the last forty years. New rocks have risen from the waters, new hot springs have burst out, and the temperature of one has been raised. The coast of Chili has been thrice permanently elevated; a considerable tract in the delta of the Indus has sunk down, and some of its shallow channels have become navigable. An adjoining part of the same district, upwards of fifty miles in length, and sixteen in breadth, has been raised about ten feet above its former level. The town of Tomboro has been submerged, and twelve thousand of the inhabitants of Sumbawa have been destroyed. Yet, with a knowledge of these terrific catastrophes, witnessed during so brief a period by the present generation, will the geologist declare, with perfect composure, that the earth has at length settled into a state of repose? Will he continue to assert that the changes of relative level of land and sea, so common in former ages of the world, have now ceased? If, in the face of so many striking facts, he persists in maintaining this favourite dogma, it is in vain to hope that, by accumulating the proofs of similar convulsions during a series of antecedent ages, we shall shake his tenacity of purpose :—

‘ Si fractus illabitur orbis
Impavidum ferient ruinae.’ ”

J. SCOFFERN, M.B.

SECRETS OF MY OFFICE

BY A BILL-BROKER.

PART XI.—A LADY BORROWER.

I SEVERAL times dined, some thirty years ago, with Abel Rouse Dottin, M.P. for Southampton, and who had formerly been a captain in the Grenadier Guards. He was a gentleman of ample means and genial disposition,—“a fine old English gentleman” in the true acceptation of the phrase. At his table I twice met with Liston, the famous, and as I believe to this day unrivalled, comedian in his peculiar but, it must I think be admitted, limited range of characters. Strange to say, he who could evoke such hearty mirth in others was himself a man of melancholic temperament—remarkably so. I seized an opportunity of asking him if the story told of his interview with the celebrated Dr. Abernethy was correct.

“Quite correct,” replied Liston, in the same tone, and with the same look with which he enunciated the phrase in the once popular, but now forgotten, *petite comédie* of “Quite Correct.”

“Yes, Mr. Lovegold,” said he, “I once, by the advice of my wife, determined to consult the great Abernethy. He did not hear my name announced, or, which is more probable, the roughly facetious medico played off a joke upon me. I am inclined to think this was the case, as it was he himself who gave currency to the rather puerile anecdote. I described my symptoms; the depression of spirit, which no medicines I had till then taken could raise to a healthy tone. Abernethy—the consultation took place at Enfield, where he had a country seat, and in the parish church of which there is his monument—Abernethy, after questioning me for some five or six minutes, said, in his rough, rude way,—

“‘All fancy—all fudge, sir. There is nothing at all the matter. You are troubled with megirms. Go and see Liston; he will do you more good than I can.’

“It is *not* true,” continued the great comedian, “that, as the story goes, I immediately exclaimed, ‘Good God! why, I am Liston!’ So far from that, I felt myself so much annoyed, suspecting as I did that the magnificent medico was laughing at me, that I threw down his fee with something of his own rudeness of manner, and immediately left the house.”

Soon after this—how well I remember that evening!—the conversation became general. One of the guests, with a comical look, asked Mr. Liston across the table if he had seen the H. B. sketch, published that day by Lane, of the Haymarket. Thousands of persons who knew London at the time I am writing of will remember that H. B.’s caricatures, artistic *jeux d’esprit*, not excelled by *Punch* of the present day, were then the rage. “If Mr. Liston had seen the H. B. published that day?” Mr. Liston *had* seen the H. B. published on that day, and felt it to be a

great compliment that he was thought to exactly resemble, even externally, such an estimable nobleman as Lord Morpeth. The H. B. sketch spoken of represented Mr. Liston passing down on one side of Piccadilly, Lord Morpeth (the present Earl of Carlisle, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland) on the other, in contrary directions, and each staring at the other as if he saw his double; the likeness between the lord and the actor being certainly remarkable. This caused a little laugh, and some one asked if the then Earl of Carlisle had not lost a large sum of money by the catastrophe of Fauntleroy's bank. I said, speaking with knowledge, that there was no truth in the rumour. The Earl of Carlisle had never banked with Fauntleroy. The general conversation again became fragmentary, divergent; and Mr. Liston, by whom I was seated, said, "I can tell you something about that unfortunate Fauntleroy's failure which may surprise you. I—if the Earl of Carlisle did not—banked with him for many years. Two or three weeks—more than two, less than three weeks—my wife, Mrs. Liston, when awakening in the morning, said she had dreamt that Fauntleroy's bank had stopped payment. Now you know, Mr. Lovegodd, that up to the evening of his arrest, the credit of Henry Fauntleroy was unimpeached."

"You are quite right, sir. No banker stood higher in Lombard Street estimation."

"I had always understood so. Knowing that, I naturally pooh-poohed Mrs. Liston's dreams. But she returned to the attack, not only the next morning, but again and again—was, in fact, for ever dreaming that Fauntleroy's bank had stopped payment; that our very considerable balance there was consequently lost. Wearied out at last by Mrs. Liston's importunities, I drew a cheque for the precise balance. It was paid, and just four days afterwards Henry Fauntleroy was a prisoner in Newgate—his bank smashed."

"I have no faith in dreams. The coincidence, it may, however, be admitted, was a striking one."

"Yes. A certain player told us long ago, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. I am of the same opinion. By-the-bye, you have no doubt heard that the Honourable George Oliphant, the intimate friend of Fauntleroy, and who was half ruined by the breaking up of his friend's bank, but a few months after he had married a beautiful girl without a penny, has unexpectedly come into a large, a very large property. Mr. Dottin, who must know, is my informant. I am very glad of it."

"I, also, am very glad of it. A capital fellow is Mr. Oliphant."

"Yes; but rather too easy tempered, and extravagantly, foolishly fond of his beautiful young wife. But it is ever thus when blooming May links itself to frosty December."

"The Honourable Mrs. Oliphant is a clever, shrewd woman of business."

"So I have heard, and makes, I dare say, an excellent wife, spite of the silly scandal that has been of late set afloat concerning her."

Our conversation took another turn, and I soon afterwards left. The firm of Lovegold and Company had reason to be glad that the Honourable George Oliphant had succeeded to a large property. His name had been in our books many years for heavy sums, and we had vainly endeavoured to reduce the amount, having had much difficulty in obtaining interest on his perpetually renewed promises to pay. His lady had since, a few weeks after the marriage, transacted her husband's business with us; he being a martyr to the gout, and of late usually confined to his house by one or other of a complication of maladies. How a man of his years, and average common sense, could, under such circumstances, be silly enough to marry a woman much less than half his own age, could only be accounted for by the vertigo which often seizes and turns the wisest, strongest heads at the sight of a charming face and finely moulded figure. The lady had both in perfection, and early managed to obtain absolute control, not only of her husband himself, but of his purse. We should now, I hoped, be able to get the Honourable G. Oliphant's debt to us liquidated; a matter we were anxious about, notwithstanding that he had insured his life in our favour—disagreeable doubts having arisen in my own mind, as well as in those of my partners, that he had not made a full disclosure of the state of his health, and that at his death payment might be refused, and we find ourselves involved in costly, doubtful litigation.

That hope was not realized, which was, however, our own fault. Not very long after my conversation with Mr. Liston at the table of the amiable member for Southampton, the Honourable Mrs. Oliphant called at the office upon business. She wore a magnificent mourning dress, was looking her very best, and a more fascinating woman I had assuredly never seen. Her business with us was to borrow, not to pay, money; and a staggering sum, too.

The position clearly and easily defined itself. The Honourable George Oliphant was in our debt to the extent of between four and five thousand pounds; an ordinary debt secured by paper promises only, and a policy of insurance far from as valuable as Bank of England notes to the same amount as the sum supposed to be assured, did not in the then state of the law (which state of the law was amended during the very next session of Parliament—the amending statute not, however, being retrospective) constitute a lien upon landed property. Of this fact the lady took good care to remind me. There was no gainsaying that proposition, and I, with some trepidation, begged to be enlightened respecting the purport of her visit.

The reply of the Honourable Mrs. Oliphant was clear, trenchant; it pierced to the root of the matter at one stroke. Her husband wanted to immediately raise from fifteen to sixteen thousand pounds upon the security of the untailed landed estates in Devonshire, which had recently fallen to him. He would either, if we should entertain the proposal, give

us a mortgage upon freehold properties yielding, after the interest of previous mortgages had been paid, over three thousand per annum; or—which we, as money-dealers, who required a much higher interest than five per cent., would no doubt prefer—the Honourable George Oliphant would sell us a detached freehold estate, called “The Willows,” estimated by competent valuers to be worth at least twenty-five thousand pounds; the honourable understanding being—a simple memorandum to that effect would only be required—that the Honourable Mr. Oliphant should be at liberty to repurchase the estate at any time within seven years. His often-renewed acceptances, and those which he would sign upon receiving a post-date cheque, payable to himself or order only, not to bearer, to be of course received by him as purchase-money. The transaction would then, the lady understood, be perfectly legal.

The strictest inquiries might be made; the title-deeds would be placed in the hands of our solicitor for examination, &c. Two conditions the Honourable Mr. Oliphant would insist upon. One, that the money—fifteen thousand and a few hundred pounds—must, for reasons personal to himself, be paid to him within ten days at latest; the other, that the fact of having sold an estate which had so lately come into his possession should be kept as secret as possible.

This was the sum and substance of the lady’s communication; and I, springing at the bait like a voracious pike, promised to give the lady a decisive answer on the morrow at twelve o’clock, pretty distinctly intimating at the same time that I thought there would be no difficulty in carrying out the proposition to a mutually satisfactory result.

One potent motive with me for entertaining the proposal, over and above a natural desire to obtain better security for the four thousand seven hundred pounds odd which the Honourable George Oliphant already owed us, was, that I happened to be well acquainted with The Willows estate, having fished in the *Tamar*, which wound its silvery course through it, during my holidays, for the previous five or six years. It was a charming locality, and I had often thought I should be content to pass there the evening of my days. Just then, too, I was first seized with a mania for the acquisition of landed property, of achieving the sacred greatness of a country gentleman.

As I expected, my partners declined the venture, which I at once took upon myself. My solicitor was especially careful in ascertaining the validity of the security; scarcely moved a step without first fortifying himself with counsel’s opinion. Not the shadow of a flaw in the title could be discovered; the deed of sale by the Honourable George Oliphant to Andrew Lovegold was settled, engrossed in duplicate, and duly executed at the vendor’s own house, on his part, he being laid up by a more than usually severe attack of gout. The lady-wife was present, as was also a gentleman from the office of Mr. Pendergast, her husband’s attorney: the attesting witnesses were that gentleman and two of my solicitor’s clerks.

The Honourable Mrs. Oliphant and the legal gentleman then adjourned

to Lombard Street, and the lady, having received an open cheque, *not* post-dated, on the Bank of England for fifteen thousand pounds, presented me with the deed. The formality of tendering the Honourable G. Oliphant's acceptances in payment was, by advice of counsel, dispensed with. They were simply destroyed.

The transaction was, I thought, closed.

By no means ; a great way off from being closed. My solicitor wrote the very next day to the tenants on The Willows estate, apprising them of the change of ownership, and that, consequently, all arrears, if any, and all accruing rents could only be paid to me or my order.

The agricultural mind on The Willows estate took for granted that it was all right, until about a month afterwards, when a principal tenant was applied to by letter from the Honourable George Oliphant's solicitor, Mr. Pendergast, for the immediate payment of arrears of rent, which demand, if not immediately complied with, a distraint would be put in without further notice, &c.

This brought about an *éclaircissement* at once, and the fiend's own enlightenment it was.

Mr. Pendergast, the Honourable George Oliphant's solicitor, called upon me to ask what explanation I could give of a letter forwarded to him from Devonshire by one of his client's tenants, and purporting to have been written by Mr. Scholefield, the attorney, instructing the Honourable Mr. Oliphant's tenants only to pay their rents to Mr. Lovegold, he having purchased The Willows estate. "I called at Scholefield's," added Mr. Pendergast, "but neither he nor his managing clerk was within ; so I thought it better to see you at once. What is the meaning of it all, Mr. Lovegold?"

"What is the meaning of it all?" echoed I, endeavouring to master the hot qualm, the cold sweat which I felt breaking out all over my body whilst the lawyer was speaking. "The meaning is surely plain enough. I have an unquestionable right to send, or direct to be sent, such notices to my own tenants."

"To your own tenants? Why, of course you have. But The Willows estate tenants are not yours. And I must be permitted to say, Mr. Lovegold, that your drawing back at the last hour, and refusing to complete the purchase, except under conditions which you must have known would not be acceded to, was a proceeding scarcely in accordance with your character as—a man whose word is his bond."

"Good heavens! Mr. Pendergast," I exclaimed, in great panic, "what can you be talking, dreaming about? I refuse to complete the purchase of The Willows estate! One of us must be downright, stark, staring mad. There, don't look at me with that starn, stony stare. Excuse me, sir, but jesting does not quite become that cast-iron countenance of yours ; especially when matters of business are being discussed. Why, I have here in this chest the title-deeds of The Willows estate, and the deed of sale, signed, sealed by the Honourable George Oliphant himself."

"Impossible! Either *you* are mad, or dreaming, or you have been cruelly victimized. Permit me to see those deeds."

Spite of my assumed confidence, the lawyer's cool imperturbability so shook, agitated me, courage and perspiration oozed out in such profuseness at my fingers' ends, that I could not grasp the smooth brass knob-handle of the iron chest, except by help of a handkerchief, with sufficient force to turn it. My damp fingers slipped round it.

"There are the deeds, Mr. Pendergast," I quavered, as I threw them on the table. "Look at them, and then dare to tell me The Willows estate is not mine."

Mr. Pendergast examined them very attentively, especially the deed of transfer and sale, his countenance darkening the while, and my heart thumping at my ribs like a steam-engine at high pressure.

"My dear sir, you have been infamously swindled. The title-deeds are copies—well executed, but copies only. The signature to the deed of sale is not my client's. Certainly not. The Honourable George Oliphant was in France at the time of the pretended deed's fraudulent execution. It appears to be a case of personation—and forgery. I am sorry, very sorry for you."

Three whole days and nights had passed before I had even partially rallied from the shock. It was not only the loss of twenty thousand pounds at one swoop, though that was heart-rending—frightful—horrible! but that I, Andrew Lovegold, who was thought able to see a hole through the thickest of millstones, should have been so egregiously duped by mere tyros in the art of swindling! There could be no question that I *had* been beautifully taken in and done for. Not the slightest shadow of a shade dimmed the glare of that tremendous fact. By the subtle management of his infamous wife, the Honourable George Oliphant had been cleverly represented,—that gentleman, unfortunately, not having been personally known, as the woman well knew, to either Scholefield or his clerks. No precaution was taken against fraudulent personation, for the simple reason that there was not the faintest suspicion that anything of the kind could be contemplated. Who passed themselves off for Mr. Oliphant and the gentleman from Mr. Pendergast's office it was impossible to conjecture. Yes; the game had been very cleverly played, and I—had lost. That was the sum total of the dreadful business.

A trip to the coast of Devon, where I could inhale the saline breath of the sea, bathe in the invigorating waters, was recommended as a means of restoring my sadly shaken *morale*. I acquiesced in the prescription, but was not much benefited; how could it be expected that I should, when I was always boiling over with savage rage? Poor Oliphant was hunted into suing for a divorce as a specific for *his* misery. It did not answer in the least, was very far indeed from answering. In sooth, we were both fast becoming "blighted beings"—though in my own case it was more folly and fancy, the loss of twenty thousand pounds, large as was such a

loss, not really damaging, or, indeed, at all affecting my social and commercial position—when a letter, bearing the Paris post-mark, renewed my life, almost my youth, gave back the old pluck and alacrity of spirit, and rekindled warmth in poor Oliphant's fast chilling veins. It was dated from an Ursuline convent near Paris: I shall copy it *in extenso*.

"To Mr. Lovegold.

"SIR,

"A wicked, wretched woman implores your mercy, your forgiveness, well knowing she deserves neither mercy nor forgiveness from man, and only hoping to obtain pardon of Eternal God through the sacrifice of the Ineffable One, who came to seek and to save the souls that were else lost.

"But repentance of crime, sainted persons, though still treading with bleeding feet the thorny, narrow way to heaven, tell me—echoing the cries of my own awakened conscience—is nothing unless I make to those I have wronged such atonement as may be yet in my power. I shall make that atonement; but first bear with me, sir, whilst I place my criminal, deeply criminal conduct truly before you. Its moral blackness does not need to be exaggerated by unfriendly censors. Let me also at once frankly own, that though I dare not write directly to the good man whom I had once the privilege to call my husband, I trust you will make known to him that I am profoundly penitent, and am endeavouring to make such poor amends as are still within my power. To know that will conduce to his peace.

"Our marriage, Mr. Lovegold, was an ill-advised one. The disparity of age was too great; yet I was fast getting to love my husband, the true quality of his nature compelled me to do so in my wayward, haughty youth, but still a love in which the affection of a daughter must have more largely mingled perhaps than that of a wife. The tempter came, I fell. By what steps in that bewildering maze of passion I was led to the abyss of degradation into which I finally plunged, I know not. At the tempter's instigation—governed by his counsels, his commands—I robbed you of an immense sum. I will furnish you with proof in the handwriting of Augustus Willesden that he instigated, goaded me on to the commission of that fearful crime; but only on condition that you forward me a written promise not to proceed against him *criminally*. Recover by civil process the moneys you will be deficient of; that is your right, and as I hear his father, Sir Piers Willesden, is dead, or at the point of death, he will be able to repay you without difficulty. But no criminal proceedings. Oh, no; spare me, I beseech you, that cruel affliction.

"We fled! It required but a short period to show me in his true colours the heartless, mercenary man for whom, but for God's infinite, especial grace, I should have sacrificed my soul as well as body. He was impatient to obtain actual possession of the enormous sum you were robbed of. I had taken the precaution to lodge it in my own name in the Bank of France. I was firm, beginning as I did to appreciate the person with whom the ministers of hell had yoked me in Satanic marriage. He became furious—mad. I was subjected to the grossest treatment; but no brutality could subdue my resolution. The people at the hotel, where we were staying in the names of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, threatened to apply to the authorities in my behalf. He then left hurriedly, and I have not seen or heard of him since. It is a mercy for which I cannot be too thankful.

"You know I am an Irishwoman, but may not know that I was born and bred in the Roman Catholic faith. But I had no religion whatever in my gay youth—my buoyant young matronhood. It was only when the night of sin and sorrow fell upon me that the teachings of childhood surged in consoling brightness

through the gloom, bringing back the old time of innocence, and faith, and truth. I had some acquaintance with the Mother Superior of this convent. I told my sad story. It was hearkened to with sorrowing sympathy, and, after a little delay, I was admitted a lay-sister in the establishment. An humble vocation, but not too humble for one who has sinned as I have.

"In the Bank of France there is now transferred to your name the sum of twelve thousand six hundred pounds. The rest was spent—partly in jewels, which are also deposited there to your order. Think as well of me as you can; and entreat George also—my hand so trembles I can scarcely write the word—not to bear too hardly in his thoughts on the deeply repentant, unworthy wife by whom he has been so cruelly wronged.

"MARGARET."

Talk of sea air, sea bathing! Commend me to such a letter as that, with special reference to the deposit at the Bank of France, for the restoration of a man's *morale*. Richard—of course I mean Andrew—was himself again, and speeded to town by express train in less than two hours after receiving "Margaret's" delightful letter. Really, the sentiment of the thing quite touched me. It had the same effect upon the Honourable George Oliphant, to whom I at once despatched it in a blank envelope. I called next day, and was not particularly surprised to hear that the Honourable George had suddenly left town for Paris,—and the Ursuline convent, mentally added I. I don't think I should be in a hurry to receive back a wife who had gone off with a gay deceiver; still it requires many different sorts of men and women to make up a world, and not being Archbishop of Canterbury, I don't know that I was bound to lift up my voice against the scandal of—of—forgiving the trespasses of others as we hope that our own shall be forgiven. At all events, it was no business of mine that the divorce suit did not even reach the *à mensa et thoro* stage; but that which really was my business in relation to Mr. and Mrs. Oliphant came to a very satisfactory conclusion. The money, jewels, &c., at the Bank of France I safely received, and very shortly afterwards, seeing by the newspapers that Cornet Augustus Willesden had, by the demise of his father, become Sir Augustus Willesden, Baronet, I took the liberty of forwarding him a copy of "Margaret's" letter, accompanying the same with a request that the balance in my favour should be remitted with as little delay as possible, in order that I might be spared the pain of doing violence to my benevolent nature by the institution of unpleasant law proceedings. Sir Augustus Willesden, Baronet, admitted the force of the appeal, and, as soon as the exact deficit could be ascertained, remitted me the amount, easing his mind at the same time by a terrible malediction upon poor "Margaret," by whom he endeavoured to make out he had been awfully victimized. In acknowledging the draft, I, in despair of using more befitting language of my own, quoted Shakspeare:—

"The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to scourge us."

POEMS ABOUT BABIES.

"AND pray, my dear Blank, what is a baby?"

It was Haggatt, the ferocious editor of the *Monday Manipulator*, who spoke thus; Haggatt, into whose benighted soul the sweet light of household love has never penetrated; Haggatt, who, because he missed five thousand a year when he was twenty-five, has never married; Haggatt, whose lares and penates are the punch-bowl, the letter-basket, the charwoman, and the spittoon; Haggatt, whose frightfully sarcastic articles on the marriages of elder and younger sons have thrown Belgravia into a ferment, and who has been known to suggest that Heliogabalus, when he pined in vain for a new luxury, should have ordered one, not of leverets, but of women's tongues, garnished with the calves' brains of complimentary sonnet writers; Haggatt, who loves to quote Swift in that passage where the Dean advises the starving Irish to eat their offspring. To this irreclaimable being, this Haggatt of the little body and the big voice, I had blindly flown, shortly after the happy occasion which had made me the father of a strapping boy. In the torrent of my emotion, the gushing joy of the hour, I myself had been safely delivered of a self-congratulatory poem—the first verse that I had written for years; and with this effusion in my hand I had rushed to Haggatt; forgetting, alas! the character of the man with whom I had to deal. With triumph on my brow, with exultation stamped on every feature, I stood in the editorial presence-chamber; and after a brief but proud allusion to my inspiration, I produced my poem, and expressed my desire that he would insert it immediately in the *Manipulator*. Imagine, then, my horror and dismay when, with an expression he meant to appear puzzled, but succeeded in making sarcastic, the terrible man inquired,—

"And pray, my dear Blank, what is a baby?"

I staggered back aghast. Was it possible that—

"Pray do not take the trouble to answer me," proceeded Haggatt, calmly. "You, like the rest of them, are unable to reply to that question."

"Not at all," I cried, quickly. "A baby, Mr. Haggatt, is a—is a—blossom on the tree of life; a glorious earnest; a tender promise. It is the flowery link that unites hearts together for the second time; it is—a—the healer of all wounds, the wiper away of all tears. It is—"

"That will do," observed Haggatt, in a tone of tender commiseration. "Blank, I pity you; I had hopes of you; I thought you a man of parts. I was mistaken. Well, sir, I will tell you what a baby is. A baby, Blank, is an anomaly. It is neither man, woman, nor boy; and, if the eyes are to be trusted, neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. Shall I compare it to a roll of red flannel, or to a boiled lobster? Shall I liken its eyes to saucers?"

—its mouth to the mouth of a voracious tittlebat? Shall I tell you that it is more helpless than the offspring of any animal that walks, or any bird that flies? Shall I affirm that it makes more mess than a monkey, and more noise than a hurdy-gurdy? Shall I, finally, observe that a baby represents matrimony; matrimony, small debts and poor relations; small debts and poor relations, bankruptcy; bankruptcy, despair; despair, suicide and the yawning tomb?"

"Monster!" I murmured.

"Precisely; you describe the anomaly in one word—Monster! But I will not be hard upon you. Though you have wantonly insulted my common sense, though you have deliberately outraged this bosom by the mention of a creature at which my manhood boils, I will not be hard upon you. You are young; your moon is yet of honey; the wasps have not yet taken possession of the hive. . . . No, Blank," he added, as if hurt, "I will *not* print your poem; I will not even read that poem. You shall not expose yourself if I can help it. To be natural, you would have to be idiotic. You would have to talk about his little *toolsicums*, and his pretty little *bootsicums*, and his beautiful pink *footsicums*. No, sir! You have not the discretion of Dogberry, but you shall not be 'written down an ass.' No man of real ability would lend himself to the folly of celebrating in song such incarnated vacuity as a baby; and your intelligence must be of a very infantine character indeed, if you imagine that sensible readers would view the absurd attempt with anything short of that scorn which it deserves."

To have deigned to answer such base language as this would have been to step from that enviable height to which paternity had lifted me. I crushed the viper with a look, and strode from the place. "Never," I said to myself, "will I again break bread with one who, like Haggatt, is without a soul!" Boiling over with indignation, I hastened home, and told to my wife the whole story of my interview with the editor. Beautiful was the scornful curl of Emily's lip, beautiful was the anger in her eye. She did not scream, she did not make a fuss; she simply pointed to the treasure that she held in her lap.

"He would give his head off his shoulders," she said, "to be the father of such an angel as that!"

Thereupon ensued a series of those endearments to which young mothers treat their offspring; thereupon followed fragments of that baby-language which Haggatt laughed to scorn, but which, to my ears, sounded like the music of the spheres.

"And the idea," exclaimed Emily, looking up after a minute—"the idea of that man having the audacity to assert that no man of real ability would write about—cherubs! I am sure you are a great deal cleverer than he is; and—and—what can be more poetic than such a picture as this? . . . Did um naughty manum say it was um monkey! . . . Can anything be more beautiful, more divine? Why, since you have been

away, baby and I have been reading the volume of poems you bought yesterday, and we have been delighted. They are very pretty, and whoever the author is, he is a man of genius, worth a dozen Haggatts."

"I suppose you mean Mr. W. C. Bennett?"

A nod.

"I am not at all astonished to find that you admire him. Any one but a Haggatt would agree that his infant poems are excellent. But suppose we have it out with Haggatt?" I exclaimed, recklessly, warming at the thought of his atrocious assertion. "Suppose I assert that Haggatt talked like an ignorant donkey, and that much greater Englishmen than Mr. Bennett have loved babies, and mourned them, and not been ashamed to sing about them?"

"Of course they have," interposed Emily, with an encouraging look.

"More, much more, might be said on this subject than I, a young husband, am able to say off-hand; and I don't want to bore you, Emily. However, let the first nail we put in the coffin of Haggatt's assertion be this:—

'Here lies, to each her parents' ruth,
Mary, the daughter of their youth;
Yet all heaven's gifts being heaven's due,
It makes the father less to rue.
At six months' end she parted hence,
With safety of her innocence;
Whose soul heaven's queen (whose name she bears),
In comfort of her mother's tears,
Hath placed among her virgin train;
Where, while that sever'd doth remain,
This grave partakes the fleshy birth;
Which cover lightly, gentle earth.'*

That, you will confess, is exceedingly pretty."

"Very."

"And who is the writer? One who, when alive, could never be charged with namby-pambyism; who waged for years a dogged war against the vile popular taste of London, crying, *Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*; whose fierce, bold spirit no repulses could subdue; and who, finally, when he was aged and rotund, sat in the 'Devil Tavern' and distributed *leges convivales* to all the bright spirits of London. He was not a strictly moral man, Emily. He would many times excel in drink. Canary was his beloved liquor. Then he would tumble home to bed; and when he had thoroughly perspired, then to study.† But if you will read his 'Timber Trees,' you will find that in some things practical he possessed a beautiful wisdom. I am speaking of Ben Jonson."

"Ben Jonson! Then he was a married man? Somehow or other I have always had a notion that he was an old bachelor."

* Epigrams, Book i., 22. † Aubrey.

"He was married, Emily, and had seven children. Do not mistake the character of the man so much as to dream that he was a Haggatt. There is a world of rich sweetness in Ben's well of English. Not yet is he appreciated at his value as a lyric poet. The gentle eye in that 'rocky' face could melt with tenderness over the beauty of innocent infancy. More than once he felt the agony of a father's pain; and it was on the occasions of his bereavement that he wrote of the little ones. Here is a beautiful epitaph from *Underwood* :—

'What beauty would have lovely styled,
What manners lovely, nature mild,
What wonder perfect,—all were filed
Upon record in this blest child.
And till the coming of the soul
To fetch the flesh, we keep the roll!'

A fit flower to blossom on so innocent a tomb! Hard-headed Ben, when he pleased, could write with a luxuriousness not surpassed even by Shakspeare. There is nothing in literature more exquisite than the opening of the 'Sad Shepherd':—

'Here she was wont to go! and here! and here!
Just where those daisies, pinks, and violets grow:
The world may find the spring by following her,
For other print her airy steps ne'er left;
Her treading would not bend a blade of grass,
Or shake the downy blow-ball from his stalk;
But like the soft west wind she shot along,
And where she went the flowers took thickest root,
As she had sow'd them with her odorous foot.'

But in praising Ben Jonson I am forgetting the baby. It is a very singular fact, my dear Emily, that our earlier poets chose to sing rather of the dead infant than of the living. Perhaps they thought infancy too common-place to be sung about until its poetry was solemnized in the shadow of death. They were wrong, I know, but perhaps they thought so. I could cull you many choice fragments about living babies, but to find complete poems—big or tiny—on that theme is not so easy. As a fragment, now, what do you think of the following? The baby is no less a one than Moses, and the poet is one I believe in—Michael Drayton. Listen! The edict against the male children has gone forth, and here are mother and child:—

'Her pretty infant, lying on her lap,
With his sweet eyes her threatening rage beguiles;
For yet he plays and dallies with his pap,
To mock her sorrows with his amorous smiles,
And laugh'd, and chuck'd, and sprea'n the pretty hands,
When her full heart was at the point to break

(This woeful creature yet not understands
 The woeful language mother's tears do speak).
 Wherewith, surprised, and with a parent's love,
 From his fair eyes she doth fresh courage take,
 And, nature's laws allowing, doth reprove
 The frail edicts that mortal princes make.
 It shall not die !' •

And now the baby is lying among the bulrushes, and the mother—

'Departs, oft stays, oft turneth back.
 Yet all this while full quietly it slept,
 Poor little brat, incapable of care.'

I will not ask you if you think these quotations beautiful : there are tears in your eyes."

She drew her hand across her eyelids, and then, looking at our treasure, showered bright love down upon its face—like sunshine flashing through rain. Then she laughed, and observed that it was foolish to be so affected by mere poetry.

"Mere poetry, my love!"

"Rhyme, then—words."

"There is nothing worth living for," I exclaimed, "nothing, save poetry. Love, hope, and—and—the baby, are the poetry of human life ; wedded to glorious music, they become immortal. Depend upon it, Emily, when we once begin to think poetry idle and namby-pamby, we are fast losing human love, which is the soul of poetry. Sentiment,—'all that sort of thing,' as Haggatt calls it,—puts round that little fellow's head a halo, a holy of holies ; and when you talk about mere poetry, you are undervaluing the baby."

"Heaven forbid!" cried my wife, devoutly. (Kisses.)

"True poetry, Emily, is that yearning to some glorious and unattained perfection which makes us climb upward ; it is the expression of our sympathy with a region beyond this narrow life, and our yearning to raise our human thought to immortal heights. It is power struggling with incompleteness. What, therefore, so fit a subject for song as the child, whose beauty is that of beauty incompleteness, and whose joy is the bright joy of golden promise?"

"Very true," murmured Emily : "I am afraid you are exciting yourself."

"Armed with the talisman of that beautiful gift—armed with that child, I could demolish a thousand Haggatts ! But to return to Michael Drayton and his noble English verse. I want to show how admirably the old gentleman expresses, in another passage, a loving but stern father's manner towards his offspring :—

'This dear present back to him she brought,
 Making the time short, telling each event
 In all shapes joy presented to her thought.
 Yet still his manly modesty was such
 (That his affections strongly so controll'd)
 As if joy seem'd his manly heart to touch,
 It was her joy and gladness to behold;
 When all rejoiced, unmoved thereat the whiles,
 On his grave face such constancy appears,
 As now scarce showing comfort in his smiles,
 Nor then revealing sorrow in his tears :
Yet oft beheld it with that steadfast eye,
Which, though it 'sdain'd the pleasedness to confess,
More in his looks in fulness there did lie
Than all their words could any way express !'

In quoting these fragments from Michael Drayton, I have forgotten to mention Ben Jonson's 'epigram' on the death of his first son. These four lines are very touching :—

'Rest in soft peace, and ask'd, say here doth lie
Ben Johnson his best piece of poetry !
 For whose sake, henceforth, all his verse be such,
 As what he loves may never like too much.'

'It pleases me to think that Drayton and Jonson frequently drank Canary together. These two strong thinkers both loved babies, as all true men have done—down from Homer, who delights us in the 'Odyssey' with the picture of the babe on Andromache's arm, shrinking from the warlike plume of Hector, and then losing all fear when the helmet is laid aside."

"And the idea," began Emily, "of such a man as Haggatt—"

"Haggatt be exterminated! Haggatt me no Haggatts! Come, Michael and Ben have not thought babies too insignificant to be sung about. Let us next see what a greater poet than either has to say on the subject. I mean Milton. Unfortunately, his verses have death again for a theme; but the tone is solemnly beautiful,—that of religious faith administering tender consolation to human sorrow, and, better to beguile the mourner, sprinkling the tiny grave with sweet conceits. The poem ends thus :—

'But oh! why didst thou not stay here below,
 To bless us with thy heaven-born innocence,
 To slake his wrath whom sin has made our foe,
 To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,
 Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,
 To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?
 But thou canst best perform that office where thou art!

'Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
 Her false, imagined loss cease to lament,
 And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild :

Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
 And render Him with patience what He lent !
 This if thou do, He will an offspring give,
 That till the world's last end shall make thy name to live.*

But of all the old poets who have written about babies, you will like Robert Herrick best. Herrick knew both Ben and Drayton long before he settled down at Dean Prior, in Devonshire, of which place he was vicar. A jovial, open-hearted fellow, and a master of lyrical melody. He has been called 'the most gladsome of the bards,'† and he is also one of the most pathetic and musical. For grace, tenderness, and music, his lyrics are unrivalled. Now Herrick loved babies with a poet's love, as he loved specially all beautiful and gentle things. If you like, I will take down his works [pointing to the bookcase], and read you some of his verses about infants."

"Oh, do!"

I walked to the bookcase, took down the "Hesperides" and "Noble Numbers," and, after glancing a moment at the dear, well-thumbed pages, read the subjoined:—

"UPON A CHILD.

"But borne, and like a short delight,
 I glided by my parents' sight.
 That done, the harder fates deny'd
 My longer stay, and so I dy'd.
 If pitting my sad parents' tears,
 You'll spil a tear or two with theirs,
 And with some flowers my grave bestrew,
 Love and they'l thank you for't. Adieu."

"UPON A CHILD THAT DYED.

"Here she lies, a pretty bud,
 Lately made of flesh and blood;
 Who as soone fell fast asleep
 As her little eyes did peep.
 Give her strewings, but not stir
 The earth, that lightly covers her!"

"UPON A CHILD.

"Here a pretty baby lies,
 Sung asleep with lullabies;
 Pray be silent, but not stirre
 Th' easie earth that covers her."

* "On the Death of a Fair Infant—dying of a Cough."

† "Retrospective Review."

"A GRACE FOR A CHILD.

"Here a little child I stand,
 Heaving up my either hand ;
 Cold as paddocks though they be,
 Here I lift them up to Thee,
 For a benison to fall
 On our meat, and on us all. Amen."

"What I am now going to read is more than pretty,—it is exquisitely beautiful !

'Go, pretty child, and beare this flower
 Unto thy little Saviour;
 And tell him, by that bud now blown,
 He is the Rose of Sharon known.
 When thou hast said so, stick it there
 Upon his bibb and stomacher ;
 And tell him, for good handsell too,
 That thou hast brought a whistle new,
 Made of a clean, strait oaken reed,
 To charme his cries at time of need ;
 Tell him, for coral thou hast none,
 But if thou hadst, he should have one :
 But poore thou art, and knowne to be
 Even as monileless as he.
 Lastly, if thou canst win a kiss
 From those mellifuous lips of his,
 Then never take a second on
 To spoil the first impression.' "

"I am more pleased with Herrick's verses," said my wife, "than any you have read to me. I don't know why it is they seem so charming; but the heart of the writer seems so full of sweetness, that it can merely throb, throb, with sounds that have meaning only to itself and— hearts as tender. You know what I mean. Fine, grand thought and lofty imagery seem out of place on such a subject; the tender beauty of the theme is more lovely than all thought; feeling, dumb, sweet feeling, seems to make perfect expression impossible. Oh, what a happy woman Herrick's wife must have been, and how much she must have loved him !"

"Humph!" I muttered, somewhat staggered. "I have not the slightest doubt that Mrs. Herrick would have been a very happy person, only, you see, Herrick lived and died—a bachelor."

"A bachelor!" cried Emily, in a tone of deep disappointment.

"Even so. If we are to accept the *Hesperides* as evidence, he was a very general lover. Julia, Corinna, Dianeme, Electra, Anthea, are the names of some of his lady-loves; but stop, I see you are going to say something severe. In real life Herrick was an exceedingly good man and worthy clergyman; his greatest fault, perhaps, being a certain liking for

sack,—a fault which he shared with most of the *bons vivants* of those days. It was the custom in his time to pay musical devotion to imaginary fair ones; to love, hope, despair, as the Scotch would say, metaphæesically. Our vicar followed the fashion—as you do, Emily, when you persist in wearing a coal-scuttle on your head. Well, about Herrick and the babies. It is disappointing, I own, to find that the writer of such sweet things should be a bachelor,—mop-eyed, too, as he tells us in his verses; but it is a great mistake to think any the less of the verses on that account. If the true poet has any power at all, it is the dramatic power of losing his self-identity in the emotions of other persons and things; for in the poet's eyes, mere things, such as flowers and streams, have animate emotions. This power of thinking with the minds and feeling with the hearts of other people is peculiarly the property of the singer. Herrick could not have written better if he had been the father of a family; you must own that. Well, for the rest, he had a sparkling lyric faculty. He loved everything which possessed the pathos, or the music, or the prettiness of the lyric; from Julia's earrings to the country life, from the country life to infant beauty, and from infant beauty to that spirit-child whose baby-smile is wiser than all the boasted reason of our ignorant and incomplete humanity."

I don't think Emily had been paying particular attention to me for some minutes. She now said, "Hush!" rose from her chair, informed me in a breathless whisper that the cherub was *fast asleep*, and carrying her burthen over to the sofa, placed him softly down on his shawl, tucked him up, cast upon him one long look of intense admiration, and then came and sat by my side.

"If we come down to more recent times," I observed, "and search among the greater poets, we shall not find many poems on our pet subject. From the time of Milton to the time of Thomson, always excepting the two names by which I measure the period, the greater amount of poetry was written on artificial themes. Dryden was too much of a turncoat, and Pope was too much of a fine gentleman, to write about babies. Honest Mat Prior, sometime gentleman of the king's bedchamber, was pathetic in 'Henry and Emma,' and comic in the 'City Mouse and Country Mouse;'* but when he was tempted to write a copy of verses about a child of quality, the only feeling he could express was a regret that baby was too young to be susceptible of the tender passion.

' For, as our different ages move,
'Tis so ordain'd (would fate but mend it!)
That I shall be past making love
When she begins to comprehend it.'

* Written, in connection with Henry Montague, to ridicule Dryden's "The Hind and the Panther."

"Let us put these fine gentlemen aside, and take down poor, much-abused Ambrose Phillips. What do you think of this?—

'TO MISS CHARLOTTE PULTENEY,

IN HER MOTHER'S ARMS.

'Timely blossom, infant fair,
Fondling of a happy pair,
Ev'ry morn and ev'ry night
Their solicitous delight ;
Sleeping, waking, still at ease,
Pleasing without skill to please ;
Little gossip, blithe and hale,
Tattling many a broken tale,
Singing many a tuneless song,
Laviah of a heedless tongue ;
Simple maiden, void of art,
Babbling out the very heart.
Yet abandon'd to thy will,
Yet imagining no ill,
Yet too innocent to blush ;
Like the linnet in the bush,
To the mother linnet's note]
Modelling her slender throat.
Chirping forth the petty joys,
Wanton in the change of toys,
Like the linnet green in May,
Flitting to each blooming spray ;
Wearied then and glad of rest,
Like the linnet in the nest.
This, thy present happy lot, ;
This, in time, will be forgot ;
Other pleasures, other cares,
Ever busy time prepares ;
And thou shalt in thy daughter see
This picture once resembled thee.'

There ! What do you think of it ?"

"Very pretty indeed. Certainly, it is not very profound, but, perhaps, I like it all the better on that account."

"Humph ! Dr. Johnson said a little in favour of that poem ; but you are, perhaps, not aware that Phillips, through such effusions, earned for himself the name of 'Namby-pamby'?"

Emily tossed her head, and smiled.

"From the Haggatts of those days, perhaps?"

"Well, not exactly. I am not disposed to call Pope a Haggatt, or John Gay ; Swift, perhaps,—but the less said about the Dean the better. My own impression, Emily, is, that Phillips wrote like a muff and a toady. Phillips on babies seems to me like treacle on bread-and-butter ; sweet, especially to very infantine palates, but sickly and cheap. Come, we don't often differ, so don't look hurt. I said just now that Dr.

Johnson was rather favourable to Phillips. Now what has the burly oracle himself to say on the subject of babies? Only this :—

‘ The tender infant meek and mild
Fell down upon the stone ;
The nurse took up the squealing child,
But still the child squeal’d on ;’

which he delivered as an impromptu, as a burlesque on the contemporary versifications of ancient legendary tales.”

“ It is very absurd !”

“ Decidedly so ; but the good doctor, though he begot a school of grown-up people, knew nothing about real infants. By the way, as we are talking of Dr. Johnson’s time, I am reminded that Whitehead, sometime poet-laureate, and best known as a voluminous playwright, has six capital lines, which are addressed to a child :—

‘ May every charm which now appears
Increase and brighten with her years,
And may that same old creeping Time
Go on till she has reach’d her prime ;
Then, like a master of his trade,
Stand still, nor hurt the work he made,’—

which you will acknowledge to be a very graceful wish indeed. Plump John Gay, too, has among his fables a very excellent one, called ‘ The Mother, the Nurse, and the Fairy.’ I can only remember a portion of it, literally, but the story is simple. A married couple pray for a son. Their wish is granted, and they esteem baby a paragon ; but in the morning the mother finds the nurse wringing her hands. ‘ What is the matter ?’ cries mamma. The nurse answers that the fairies have put a changeling in place of the real child, and to support her assertion observes,—

‘ Where are his father’s mouth and nose ?
The mother’s eyes, as black as sloes ?
See here a shocking, awkward creature,
That speaks a fool in every feature.’

Mamma, however, sees nothing of the sort, but affirms that baby is a beauty. While they are discussing the point, up starts a pigmy, who, perching on the cradle-top, thus reprimands them :—

‘ Whence sprung this vain, conceited lie
That we the world with fools supply ?
What ! give our sprightly race away
For the dull, helpless sons of clay !
Besides, by partial fondness shown,
Like you, we dote upon our own.
Where yet was ever found a mother
Who’d give her booby for another ?
And should we change with human breed,
Well might we pass for fools indeed !”

"That is capital!" cried Emily. "But—hush! baby is waking."

Baby *was* waking, and was taking good care to let us know it. A year ago I should have stopped my ears to that dulcet sound, but now I sat benignantly smiling, and drinking every echo; while Emily, catching up the treasure, commenced walking to and fro in the apartment, and murmuring as she did so the following extemporaneous composition:—

"By, by, ba-by!
By, by, ba-by!
By, by, ba-by!
Bo, bo, bo!
Bee, bee, bee-by!
Bee, bee, bo!"

The above, though admirable as the sounds by which Aristophanes, in the "Clouds," mimics the songs of birds, is not Greek; but it is a language which, when spoken by a tongue native to the accents, overruns with fluidity and sweet expression. Poetically speaking, it is fully equal to Mr. Ambrose Phillips' sublimest baby efforts. Unintelligible? No! Baby, at any rate, understood it thoroughly, and evidently thought it pretty; for he became quite silent, and listened intently, and finally dropped off smiling into a sweet sleep. By this time the bassinet was brought in, and baby, tucked snugly therein, was made comfortable for the night. Not till the "materials" were brought out, and I had mixed my habitual "night-cap" of whiskey and water, did I finish the dissection of Haggatt.

"I think our assertive friend is very nearly done for," I observed, with a self-satisfied smile. "If I have sinned, I flatter myself that I have sinned in rather respectable company. Even Ambrose Phillips was no mere contemptible poetaster. The man who could write 'The Winter Piece,' could do nobly. Before we come down to more modern times, let us take a run across the Tweed into Ayrshire. I know you admire Burns, Emily; I know you think he was a grand fellow, in spite of his little failings. Well, he, too, wrote tenderly and pathetically of babies. His verses on the death of his infant daughter are neither very touching nor very brilliant; but what can surpass in pathos some of his verses 'On the Birth of a Posthumous Child'?—

'Sweet flowret, pledge o' meikle love,
And ward o' mony a prayer,
What heart o' stone would thou na move,
Sae helpless, sweet, and fair!

'November hirkles o'er the lea,
Chill, on thy lovely form;
And gane, alas! the sheltering tree
Should shield thee frae the storm.

'May He who gives the rain to pour,
And wings the blast to blow,
Protect thee frae the driving shower,
The drifting frost and anaw!'

"While we are in Scotland, Emily, we must pay our meed of praise to the many admirable songs about babies contained in the Scottish literature. James Ballantine, of Edinburgh, has distinguished himself on the pet theme; and there is still living in Glasgow a poor working man named William Miller, whose nursery songs are capital. Another Glasgow 'callant'—a good fellow and an excellent poet,—one William Freeland, has addressed some bonny lyrics to his infant daughter; but, unfortunately, I have none of his compositions to show you. Haggatt, I know, would sneer at these last examples, so let us make an end of the fellow at once, and demolish him with Wordsworth and Coleridge. Let us commence with Coleridge, than whom no choicer thinker has ever, in modern times, essayed the journey up Parnassus. Metaphysical dreamer though he was, incapable as he seemed of conducting the most ordinary affairs of life, he possessed a heart in tune with all innocent loveliness, from the baby blossom on the mother's breast to the full-blown flower of Christabel's timid purity. Neither unfrequent nor namby-pamby were his allusions to little ones; and more than one fine lyric he has dedicated to them, ennobling and being ennobled by his theme. His 'Infant's Epitaph'* I shall not quote, nor the very fine lines, 'To an Infant,' contained among his 'Juvenile Poems.' My first task shall be to cull for your enjoyment some verses from a poem entitled, 'On the Christening of a Friend's Child.' The lines I am going to quote form the beautiful prayer of a noble mind, clothed in language so rich that every simile is a gem:—

- 'This day among the faithful placed,
And fed with fruitful manna;
Oh, with maternal title graced,
Dear Anna's dearest Anna!
- 'While others wish thee wise and fair,
A maid of spotless fame,
I'll breathe this more compendious prayer,—
Mayst thou deserve thy name!
- 'Thy mother's name, a potent spell
That bids the Virtues hie
From mystic grove and living cell,
Confess'd to fancy's eye:
- 'Meek Quietness without offence,
Content in homespun kirtle,
True Love, and True-Love's Innocence—
White blossom of the myrtle!
- 'Associates of thy name, sweet child,
These Virtues mayst thou win,
With face as eloquently mild—
To say they lodge within!

* Compare with one of Herrick's epitaphs, quoted above, the following lines from the "Infant's Epitaph" of Coleridge:—

"Here the pretty babe doth lie,
Death sang to sleep with lullaby."

The lips that had framed the lofty Hymn of Chamouni could pray thus tenderly for a little child. Surely this builder of the lofty rhyme is not known at his value,—as, perhaps, with one exception, the noblest singer of his time. Moreover, there is scarcely a reminiscence connected with his private life which does not represent Coleridge as thoroughly gentle, amiable, and lovable. Well, time adjusts all things. Let us now see how beautifully Coleridge, in two of his best sonnets, expresses two states of feeling in which you, as a partial advocate on the baby question, will be deeply interested.

‘SONNET

COMPOSED ON A JOURNEY HOMEWARD, THE AUTHOR HAVING RECEIVED INTELLIGENCE OF THE BIRTH OF A SON.

‘Oft o’er my brain does that strange fancy roll,
Which makes the present (while the flash doth last)
Seem a resemblance of some unknown past,
Mix’d with such feelings as perplex the soul
Self-question’d in her sleep; and some have said
We lived ere yet this robe of flesh we wore.
O my sweet baby, when I reach my door,
If heavy looks should tell me thou art dead
(As sometimes, through excess of hope, I fear),
I think that I should struggle to believe
Thou wert a spirit, to this nether sphere
Sentenced for some more venial crime to grieve,
Did scream, then spring to meet heaven’s quick reprieve,
While we wept idly o’er thy little bier!’

‘TO A FRIEND

WHO ASKED HOW I FELT WHEN THE NURSE FIRST PRESENTED
MY INFANT TO ME.

‘Charles! my slow heart was only sad when first
I scann’d that face of feeble infancy;
For dimly on my thoughtful spirit burst
All I had been—and all my child might be.
But when I saw it in its mother’s arm,
And hanging at her bosom (she the while
Bent o’er his features with a tearful smile),
Then I was thrill’d and melted, and most warm
Impress’d a father’s kiss; and, all beguiled
Of dark remembrance and presageful fear,
I seem to see an angel-form appear;
’Twas even thine, beloved woman mild;
So for the mother’s sake the child was dear,
And dearer was the mother for the child!’

My wife’s face absolutely kindled with delight.

"It would be impertinence to praise such poetry as that," she said "but I have never admired Coleridge—whom you have always idolized so—never admired him so heartily as to-night."

"Not till our more human feelings become spiritualized by some special emotion,—till, I mean, the absolute spiritualization of a noble experience exalts us for the moment to the atmosphere in which the poets, whose souls contain the powers of all experience, live and breathe,—not till then do we recognize the glory of our immortal singers. The joyful inspiration comes, in some shape or other, and we see, and know, and almost worship; and thus, you see, your special knowledge, in the shape of baby there, enables you—however imperfectly—to comprehend Coleridge. . . . Well, it is getting late. I was going to cull some choice fragments from Wordsworth, arch-priest of the English mountains; but as our last illustration has not left Haggatt the ghost of a leg to stand on, I will content myself with a single quotation,—and then to bed! Fix your eyes on the tiny sleeper yonder, and, if you can, imagine that the poet is addressing your baby."

Little one was fast asleep, his small face smiling sweetly, his little hand lying outside the shawl which covered him; and turning our eyes upon his slumbering beauty, we felt to the depths of our soul the truth of that wondrous "Ode,"* from which—in a low voice, like that of an awed worshipper at a shrine—I quoted the noble lines,—

"Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity!
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage! thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind!—
Mighty prophet! seer blest!
On whom these truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost—the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave—
A presence which is not to be put by!"

I suppose Haggatt would have considered us very egotistical and namby-pamby, but as I spoke the above there were tears in our eyes; and before we went to bed I produced and read aloud *my* poem, and was assured, for the hundredth time, that I was the profoundest genius (always excepting the BABY) in all Christendom!

R. W. BUCHANAN.

* "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood."

GHOSTDOM

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TREASURE-TROVE," ETC., ETC.

GHOSTS never possessed the charm over the imagination exercised by fairies and water-spirits; nevertheless, they still haunt odd corners of the human world, while the delicate elves of the olden time are dethroned and cast aside, like the dolls of a departed childhood.

It is true the Danish peasant still sees Trolles covering the hill-side when Denmark's foes are approaching; and the Swedish rustic believes that Ole Bull learned the witchcraft of his bow from the Neck (water-spirit) of his native streams; but only in those far northern lands lingers the pretty poetical superstition.

England's fairies exist no longer in foxglove and woody dell; they appear now only in a Christmas pantomime. Our delicate Ariels are flown; and if Puck still plays us a shrewd turn occasionally,—throws down our inkstand, hides our pen, or occasions any other of those small "missings" which are so absurdly provoking,—he is utterly ignored as their perpetrator, and his poor joke loses its point.

But ghosts preserve their shadowy empire. There is sympathy between them and mankind. They were once of our kindred,—they suffered, wept, rejoiced, laughed, as we do. Ay; and as long as the instincts of immortality live in the heart of man, so long will he cling to the belief in apparitions, in spite of reason or philosophy.

The soulless Undines will vanish from the mind, but the disembodied soul will haunt it still, even when denied or degraded; for certainly everything has been done of late to vulgarize ghosts, and destroy their *prestige*. They become ludicrous as rapping ghosts, haunting tables and household furniture. Formerly, when a ghost—

"Burst the leaden bonds of" death "that bound him,"

it was for a special end, an important purpose,—to reveal a crime, to right a wrong, to reclaim a soul. Reason assented to the need of some violation of ordinary laws in such a case. But now . . . alas for ghostdom! Its denizens come for no purpose; they rap out with difficulty a few sentences of inanity, which any ordinary mortal could have supplied. They "come when men do call" in a way that would have astonished Owen Glendower himself; and the only end gained by their communion with men appears to be that of filling the pockets of Yankee mediums.

Now such a ghostdom as this is all very well for a new country like America, which has no romantic past, which never possessed a fairy or a water-nymph; the sole spiritual history of which consists in a few hideous records of witches and witch-burning. But it won't do for England. *Our* ghostdom is awful—mysterious, above humanity (not below it) in its knowledge; such as Shakspeare's genius immortalized.

And such we have in the records and superstitions of the people.

We can even add our own mite to its history; and as everybody, whether a believer in it or not, welcomes a good ghost story, we will relate some few (never yet made public), told us in two cases by the actual ghost-seer himself, in every instance by a person to be relied on,—at least, so far as his own belief in the vision is concerned.

We give them, hoping they are calculated to reflect no discredit on the haggard realm to whose annals they belong.

The first was told to us by a general officer of high ability, who had filled the post of Governor over several of the chief dependencies of the British Crown; a man remarkable alike for his strict honour, ability, and goodness.

While he was Governor of Van Diemen's Land (he told us), a certain merchant captain and two of his companions—all three men of notoriously bad lives—requested an interview with him. They were admitted to the office where Sir G. A. was sitting with his private secretary.

The object of their visit was singular: it was to tell the astonished Governor that they had seen a spirit! The preceding day (Sunday) they had passed at a tavern, drinking and playing billiards. Evening found them at the billiard-table. It was already too dark to see clearly, when one of them proposed ordering lights. The captain assented, saying jestingly, while they waited for them to be brought,—

"Well, we have kept a pretty sabbath, playing and drinking all day!"

"I wonder," another remarked, "that we are allowed to do so, if there is really One up on high."

The third billiard-player answered by a scoffing blasphemy.

At that moment a singular light, which expanded and gradually shadowed out a form, appeared at the other end of the billiard-table, growing more distinct as they gazed on it; and a voice was heard by them all, uttering these awful words,—

"I summon you to appear in God's presence this time twelve months."

Then the appearance vanished.

Awed, sobered, terrified, the guilty three remained. They feared to separate all night: a great horror was over them. When morning dawned they determined to see the good Governor, and tell him their tale. His modesty did not allow him to perceive that this instinctive seeking him was itself a homage to goodness.

When he had heard them, he suggested that the vision was, very probably, an hallucination of their own minds; that they had been drinking deeply, and that the appearance was, doubtless, owing to the fumes of wine. Nevertheless, he failed not to urge on them a better and wiser course of life.

But they were firm in a strong belief that they had both heard and seen a being from another world. They requested Sir George to allow his secretary to enter the story in the office books, and to permit them to

sign it. He consented, good-naturedly, and also added his name and Captain M.'s (the secretary's) to the record. With thanks they took leave of him, and quitted the office.

A year passed away. The Governor had forgotten his strange visitors and their vision, when one day the sea captain again presented himself, this time on business. When it was concluded he paused, saying,—

"You were right, Sir George. It was a dream, that appearance. The year was up yesterday, Sunday, and I am alive and well, you see."

The Governor recollected the recorded summons.

"I hope," he said, courteously, "the delusion proved a beneficial one."

"Ay, it did; as far, at least, as I am concerned. I know nothing of my old comrades, but I have been a changed man from that hour."

When he was gone, Captain M. confirmed this assertion.

"He is a thoroughly reformed character," he said. "I am going to dine with him on board this evening."

The Governor was thoughtful.

"The truth of the vision," he said, is not yet fully tested. The year does not date from the days of the week. The date of the month on which the twelvemonth would expire falls on a Monday this year, of course; but I am glad that fact has escaped our friend the captain's observation, or strong imagination might have fulfilled the prophecy."

The secretary dined on board the merchant ship that evening. The captain was gay, and apparently quite well. He chatted on indifferent subjects. Just as the lights were brought he rose to give a toast—"The health of the king;" but as he spoke, he tottered, and fell forward on the table with a crash of breaking glass.

The terrified guests raised him. He was dead!

They said it was heart disease; but both the Governor and secretary were so impressed by the singular coincidence of time and the event (answering to the recorded summons), that they took pains to trace the other two "called" men. After a time they learned that both had perished on the same day; one of fever, the other by an accident in the bush,—widely severed in life, but united in the awful moment of death. Surely we may say of this strange fact, with Shakspeare,—

"There are more things in heaven and earth . . .
Than are dreamt of in " our "philosophy."

Our second ghost legend we owe to a rather celebrated lady, to whose brother the ghost appeared. The story has a terrible human horror about it.

Mr. B. (my beautiful friend's brother) was a magistrate for New Liverpool, Australia, at the time the circumstance occurred—now many years ago. His sister and mother lived with him. One evening he returned from New Liverpool after attending a magistrates' meeting, pale and agitated to an extraordinary degree. He refused to inform them of

the cause of his distress, but sent at once for the nearest clergyman (a missionary), and shut himself up with him. We will not inflict on our readers any share of the curiosity of the ladies of Mr. B.'s family, but relate at once that which *they* learned only after the affair was ended.

As he was riding, unattended, down a narrow lane not far from his home, in the bright moonlight, his horse suddenly stood still, shaking and quivering in every limb, and could not be induced to move onwards. Mr. B., supposing that some deadly snake, perceptible to the quick senses of the animal, lay in the path, or that some similar savage danger lurked before him, glanced perplexedly around; and his gaze was at once fascinated by a hideous vision. On the other side of the hedge bounding the narrow way stood the figure of a man in his shirt, distinctly visible in a singular light which floated round it. The shirt was dripping with blood; the throat of the apparition—cut from ear to ear—gaped horribly upon him! With a cry of horror Mr. B. had urged on his steed, which, no longer resisting, bore him home at full gallop.

The missionary who listened to this story was inclined to think that the ghost was a mere figment of the brain, over-excited as Mr. B.'s occasionally was, by the horrid cases brought before him in his magisterial capacity. He consented, however, to accompany Mr. B. the next evening to the same spot, on the chance of seeing the ghost, with nerves braced for the occasion.

They went—and not in vain. Again the ghastly shadow stood in its lurid light beside the hedge. But now they paused and watched it. By slow degrees, gliding mournfully away, the apparition reached the middle of the field, and there appeared to sink into the earth.

Much astonished, the two gentlemen looked at each other.

"What does this mean?" asked Mr. B.

"That murder has been done, I should think. At any rate, to-morrow morning, if I were you, I would have the centre of the field dug up," replied his friend.

Mr. B. assented, sending early for constables, &c., from New Liverpool to be on the spot.

The animated reciter of this story brought the scene vividly before us. The men with pickaxes, the constables, the wondering multitude assembled in that green meadow of the far-off world; while at a distance, crouching behind the brushwood of the hedge, lurked *one* who gazed with wondering and awe-struck eyes, and had no power to turn himself from the spot.

They found the turf had been recently cut and replaced; the earth disturbed. They dug, guided by those traces, and in a short time there lay exposed before the sun a corpse, in its bloody shirt and with its gaping throat.

A cry of horror went up from the people, and the fellow skulking by the hedge drew nearer—like a moth to the flame.

"It is John Hare, who lived with Convict Brown!" cried a constable.

"Why, we thought he was on his road to the old country. His time of transportation was up, and he set out, as we believed, four or five days ago."

"Bring the man with whom he lived hither," commanded the magistrate.

They had not far to seek him. He was recognized in the skulking fellow by the hedge, who forthwith had turned and fled.

He was overtaken, brought back, and placed beside that unholy grave, and there, falling on his knees, confessed, in a great silence which made every word audible, that he had murdered Hare for the sake of the hoarded gold the ex-convict was about to carry home with him. They had worked as ticket-of-leave men together, and he knew how rich the man whose penal servitude had expired was grown. So he let him bid farewell to the few neighbours and comrades they had (purposing as he did, poor fellow, to leave at dawn of the next morning), and at midnight he murdered him. He buried the body in the field the very night before the magistrate had seen the ghostly revealer of the secret.

Seeing that the earth could not hide his slain, he confessed his crime at once.

Our friend added that Brown was hung for the crime, and that the full particulars of its singular discovery are recorded in the town archives of New Liverpool, where, if any of our readers like to seek for them, they may now be found. The lady who was sister to the ghost-seer had an entire belief in the fact which had thus fallen under her own observation. Discussing it with her, she suggested that in a new country, peopled in a great degree by criminals, such a manifestation might be as much needed as in the early ages of the world; that it was, perhaps, the only mode of startling and awing the hardened consciences of the people, and vindicating in their eyes the outraged majesty of Heaven.

It might be; but for one *real* ghost, how many imaginary ones!

We have only once heard of the ghost of a child; and though we cannot authenticate it as we have the others, it is so pretty, that we must needs give it a place in our Ghostdom.

A young guardsman of King George III.'s, arriving in the twilight of a January day at C—— Castle, was shown to his room by a man-servant, who apologized for the distance it was from the other part of the castle (where the family lived), by the fact that the dwelling was over-crowded. Therefore the young soldier was not surprised when a tiny wicket was opened on the top of a flight of stairs to admit him, and he was shown into a room, the barred windows of which announced a nursery of former days. But it was now a large and well-appointed bedroom, with a bright fire blazing on the hearth. Chilly from his journey, the young man drew an easy chair forward, and seated himself within the light of the blaze, dreamily warming his hands, and assuredly not thinking of children.

Suddenly he perceived standing close beside him an infant of about

three or four years old ; a lovely boy in his little night-dress, with long, fair ringlets floating on his shoulders.

The officer uttered an exclamation of astonishment ; but, believing that the child was one belonging to the family, addressed a few caressing words to it, and extended his hand to smooth its golden hair. To his surprise his fingers rested on nothing. He could see, but not feel, the tiny visitant beside him !

His amazement may be conceived. He had, however, courage enough to say,—

“ Who are you ? Whence come you ? ”

With a sigh the babe pointed to the hearthstone, and vanished.

Greatly perturbed, the young gentleman rang for his valet, dressed for dinner, and sent a message to the housekeeper to the effect that he could not sleep in that ghostly nursery. After dinner he told his adventure to his host, who listened with an air of vexation.

“ Your fancy, doubtless,” he said, as his guest paused. “ You had heard that the room was haunted, and your imagination readily conjured up the ghost.”

“ No,” replied the soldier ; “ I had never heard of a haunted room, nor would a nursery have suggested itself to me as such. It is, then, not the first time the little ghost has been seen ? ”

“ Or imagined,” added Lord P. “ There is such a feeling current, and the story helps to shape a ghost. Lady P. was once walking with a young child beneath the old nursery windows, when he began to nod up at them energetically.

“ ‘ To whom are you nodding ? ’ asked she.

“ ‘ To the dear little child at the window,’ he replied. ‘ What golden curls he has ! But why is he in his night-gown now ? It is too early for bed.’

“ Lady P. looked up, but could not see the vision, which her young guest persisted was still smiling down on him. We thought the boy had heard of the ghost from his nurse, and that his fancy had shaped it from the reflection of the sunbeams.”

“ Believe me, the appearance was a real one,” said the officer, with earnestness. “ Let me persuade you to have the room examined ; especially the hearthstone.”

His host was persuaded. The next day the large, old-fashioned hearthstone was raised. It covered a cavity, in which lay a tiny skeleton (with golden hair still floating on its shoulders), clad in a little night-dress !

It had long been buried, and, as an examination of it proved, the child had died by violence. Looking back over the family history, it was found that a child-heir *had* disappeared—stolen, it was believed, by gipsies,—and that his uncle had succeeded to the property, but had died childless, killed by a fall from his horse soon afterwards. The present family then succeeded to the inheritance. The little bones had Christian

burial given them, and on a marble slab, inserted in the mantelpiece, they recorded the discovery of the tiny corpse; an inscription which, perpetuating the memory of the child-ghost to this day, continues to give the nursery the uninviting appellation of the Haunted Room.

But ghostdom has many false legends belonging to it, many purely imaginary inmates. How they very often originate in fear or fancy the following story will tell.

A very amiable young friend of ours told us that she once paid a visit to a family in Ireland who were proud of an hereditary banshee. On arriving she found the lady of the house anxious for the safety of her eldest son, who was out yachting, the weather being wild and stormy. They sat that afternoon in the large old library, a handsome but dark room, with a polished oak floor, and only a Persian carpet spread in the middle of it. So gloomy was it, that the hostess and her young guest placed themselves as near the window as possible; the elder lady knitting, the younger netting a purse of scarlet silk. As the storm gathered in fury, the mother, restless and unhappy, left the room, and Miss W. found herself alone in the darkening twilight of the November day. A heavy sky hung over the old trees outside, which bent and creaked in the wind, wildly waving their huge arms in impotent strife with the blast. The noises were loud and mingled. She could not see into the corners of the apartment now. Recollections of the banshee stories with which her hostess had been entertaining her returned. Her silk was exhausted, and she required a new skein to be wound.

As she had no one to hold it, she put it over two chairs (as doubtless our lady readers have sometimes done), and, reseating herself, tried to drive the banshee from her mind. The wailing of the wind oppressed her; it sounded not unlike the lamentation of a spirit, but her hostess had informed her that no such poetical token was given by their banshee. It always announced its presence by raps, like the familiar of an American medium.

Just as this occurred to her she was startled by three loud, distinct ones. She paused in her task, her heart beating wildly; then reproaching herself for her folly, she cried,—

“Come in.”

But no one entered! All was silent save the moaning wind. She resumed her task. Again three distinct raps! Again she called “Come in,” and no one came.

Struggling with her fears she continued her winding, to be a third time startled by still louder raps.

Her courage gave way; she rose, took a taper from the writing-table, lighted it, and, afraid to glance round the room, hurried to the door.

As she reached and opened it, her taper was suddenly pulled from the stand and extinguished, and *something* clasped her arms tightly to her sides. *Something* intangible—terrible!

In a perfect agony of fear, she struggled to free herself from that cruel, painful embrace; burst it by a mighty effort, and with loud screams staggered into the hall and fell on the floor, where the family, drawn to the spot by her cries, found her insensible.

They carried her to another room, and when she had recovered her consciousness eagerly questioned her as to what had alarmed her. She told her story. The servants at once exclaimed,—

“The banshee!”

The poor mother turned deadly pale. Her look of agony restored Miss W.’s self-possession and reason.

“Indeed,” she said, “I don’t think it was a banshee. Let us take a light and examine the room; some one must have played me a trick.”

Such an idea was at once denounced by all, but Miss W. persisted in immediately returning to the library. She was accompanied thither by the terrified family.

Behold, the wax taper lay on the floor, tightly bound by a scarlet thread of netting silk; two ends of the same, broken and curled, lay near it.

Miss W. bared her arms, and there, just above the elbow, were two deep cuts, made by the broken silk. It was all clearly to be understood now. As her silk shortened in the winding it had raised the chairs, and their legs had made the raps on the polished boards, which raps had of course ceased with each pause she made in her task. On rising in her hurry and alarm to get a light, she had somehow managed to draw off a great deal of silk, and entangle it round the taper and herself. As she moved towards the door she had shortened it, till it pulled the taper from its stand and bound her own arms to her side.

Everybody knows how difficult it is to break a strong, coarse thread of netting silk; no wonder her arms were cut by the effort.

Had she not returned and instantly investigated the matter, the taper and silk would doubtless have been removed by the servants, their connection not observed or understood, and thus another testimony would have been added to the existence of the traditional banshee.

If all ghostly visitations were as bravely and immediately investigated, the annals of superstition would assuredly be greatly diminished. But we leave the decision of ghosts or no ghosts to the judgment of our readers, well aware that “there is much to be said on both sides.”

To those who deny their ephemeral existence we address the words of him who gave its crowning grace to ghostdom:—

“If” these “shadows have offended,
Think but this (and all is mended),
That you have but slumber’d here
While these visions did appear;
And this weak and idle theme
No more yieldeth but a dream.”—SHAKESPEARE.

MY POLITICAL PATIENT.

"MILNER, *cher confrère*," said my fellow-Æsculapius, Zaninzki, shaking the feathery flakes of snow from his wolfskin pelisse, as he walked into my apartment in old Gregson's *hôtel meublé* on English Quay, St. Petersburg, "I have something of importance to propose to you."

I could not refrain from smiling at this grave exordium, though the speaker's manner and tone were more serious than usual. Zaninzki was a year or two older than myself, and ranked immediately above myself, Samuel Milner, F.R.S., on the medical staff of the Imperial Foundling Hospital. I had been for the last fourteen months an assistant surgeon at that hospital, and had lately sent in my resignation. Indeed, I was heartily sick of Russia, stoves, spies, snow, the dust and gnats in summer, the enormous expenses of living, and the influence which a government at once cruel and corrupt diffused through every stratum of society. Zaninzki, a Pole, as his name implies, was one of the few persons in St. Petersburg for whom I entertained a regard, and he and I were on a footing of friendly intimacy, but what to make of this new form of address I knew not. I had never known Felix Zaninzki, one of the most light-hearted and candid of mortals to all appearance, propose anything weightier than a game at billiards or a boating expedition on the Neva; and I felt little inclined just then for any recreation or sport.

To own the truth, I was sitting, sick at heart, turning over old letters and memorials of bygone days, and remembering, with a bitterness of spirit that was not, I dare say, very reasonable, how my early plans and high hopes had been blighted and thwarted by the course of events. Two years had I been in Russia, having come out as medical attendant to a sickly boy of large property, who died within a few months of his exchanging the warm air of south Europe for the damp chill of the Finland swamps. Upon his death I was glad to accept the humble office of assistant surgeon to the hospital I have named. And now I was giving up my post, despairing of the promotion which skill could not obtain for a friendless stranger, too poor to bribe, and without powerful interest, and having experienced the disgust and lassitude which seldom fail to accompany a thankless task. Without any desire to boast, I may say that during my stay at St. Petersburg I had effected some useful improvements in the institution to which I was attached. A memorial of my drawing up, pointing out many petty abuses and much peculation, which I found existed in the hospital, had reached the Emperor's own hands, and had led to some salutary alterations. The high mortality among the helpless inmates had been sensibly reduced. But by my interference I had made many enemies among those in authority, and it had been decided to get rid of the inconvenient English eye-witness, if annoyance and official persecution could avail. These *had* availed, and I had resigned my post, and

was going back with a lighter purse than when last I trod the London pavement.

Zaninzki's present errand, however, had no reference to billiards or sledging. He had come to propose that I should accept the post of medical adviser to an elderly Russian of rank, who had been ordered to Pisa for his health, and whose physicians had forbidden him to undertake a sea voyage. Indeed, the latter mode of travel was not very practicable just then, as the Baltic was closed by ice, and the smooth, firm snow of the Russian roads was in admirable condition for the passage of the wheelless carriages which Muscovites prefer. Winter had set in early, and a plentiful fall of snow had been succeeded by an intense frost, so that the highways admitted of the most rapid and easy locomotion, and would continue to do so until fresh snowstorms, or a warm wind, should injure the hard surface.

My friend hastily ran over the various advantages of the opportunity that now presented itself. General the Baron Soltoff was a sad sufferer from various complaints, and his temper was none of the best; but he was rich and liberal, and the salary was a handsome one. The baron was a widower, but his charming daughter, who was thoroughly devoted to him, and nursed him with the most affectionate patience, did the honours of his house to perfection. At Pisa—or at Rome—the Soltoffs would be sure to find a large circle of friends, and to entertain them with a hospitality that could not fail to make our sojourn an agreeable one. The baron himself, though very ill just then—having incautiously returned to Russia from a long residence in the milder climate of the South, and always liable to attacks of gout or asthma,—was an accomplished personage, who had spent much of his life in foreign Courts, and had a fund of anecdote and information that would surprise me.

At this point I interrupted Zaninzki by saying that there were, indeed, two features of the case which surprised me; one of which was, that a sick person should venture on a journey in that piercing cold, and through the comfortless interior of Russia; while the other was that an obscure individual like myself should have been selected as his medical attendant.

I thought at first that Zaninzki looked a little disconcerted, but if so, his laugh was frank and hearty as he replied,—

“Needs must, my dear colleague, when the devil drives, and General Soltoff may as well die on the road as stay here to perish by inches. And as for the danger of a journey in the dry cold of winter, believe me, it is much less than you would suppose, and by far less perilous in this climate than the raw moisture of a thaw. And if you won't believe me, at least—heretic that you are—respect the opinion of those grave and reverend seniors of our profession, Dr. Sergius, Dr. Paniatin, and your own compatriot, Dr. Phipson. All these physicians are agreed that M. Soltoff's only chance is in a speedy departure. And as for his choosing yourself, why, *mon ami*, you are better known by repute than your modesty

is willing to admit. More than one friend has told the General of the clever Englishman, and he has a prejudice in favour of your countrymen."

Before the interview came to an end I had agreed to accept the proposition, and to devote such professional skill as I possessed to the baron's service. In coming to this decision I was not entirely influenced by the amount of the salary, though that was far higher than any remuneration which I had previously received for duties much more arduous. But it was some vague idea of settling in medical practice in some pleasant Italian city, when the baron's health should no longer require my care, that prompted me to close with the offer. I had no very definite prospects before me in my native country, and in this case I really felt as if fortune, according to the proverb, were knocking at my door.

What Zaninzki said in praise of the beauty and merits of Mademoiselle Soltoff, though the Pole appeared to dwell upon the subject as if he desired to pique my curiosity with reference to this pink and pattern of all good daughters, did not impress me much. I had been allowed the *entrée* of a few aristocratic drawing-rooms in St. Petersburg, and my own experience had not made me a believer in Muscovite good looks or Muscovite amiability. Those pale, sallow belles of the Russian *salons*, engrafting French millinery and French graces on the hard Tartar nature, were by no means to my taste, and I had often sighed as I remembered the simple virtues of my own countrywomen, never so sharply contrasted as by the tone of St. Petersburg society. I therefore made up my mind that Zaninzki's commendations of the young lady's charms were mere compliments, probably due to his gratitude for some past kindness rendered by the General—once, as I gathered from my friend's hints, marshal of the nobility of some government in Great Russia—to his father or himself. Indeed, it was the first time I had ever heard Zaninzki speak heartily in praise of a Russian; for, in general, though averse to political discussion, he was more prone to satirize the conquerors of his country than to point out their merits.

Baron Soltoff's residence was at Moscow, and as the railway had recently been opened between the Holy City and the modern capital, I had the prospect of as rapid and easy a journey thither as the system of police would permit.

The Czar Nicholas, as is well known, had never thoroughly approved of the introduction of railways, levelling and revolutionary contrivances borrowed from the restless West; and he had insisted that the speed of transit and the number of departures from the terminus at either end should be reduced to a minimum. The solitary train, therefore, that left St. Petersburg in the morning was always crowded to excess, and two hours, at the least, were spent by each passenger in complying with the official formalities that formed the indispensable preface to a journey.

Zaninzki and I drove down together to the station, after a hurried breakfast, and through the gloom of the wintry morning. I had never guessed how thoughtful and painstaking a friend my colleague

would turn out as the hour of our separation drew near. I had been accustomed to look on Zaninzki as a gay, good-hearted fellow, not overburdened with brains, and certainly averse to trouble. Indeed, the Pole had always deferred to my judgment in a manner flattering to a young man, and had frankly admitted my superiority in worldly knowledge; but I had never thought that my companion's regard for me was such as to induce him, not only to procure me the office of household surgeon to my new patient—as, in spite of his laughing denials, I felt assured that he had done,—but to render every assistance in his power towards promoting my comfort on the journey, sparing no trouble to smooth the way for my departure. It was Zaninzki who busied himself about my outfit, pointing out the shops where the best and cheapest furs, sheepskin boots, and other necessaries of travel were to be procured. Above all, it was Zaninzki who took upon himself the whole irksome task of getting my “permit of residence” exchanged for a passport duly *visé* by the suspicious authorities, who were notorious for the long delays, the vexatious queries, and the objections only to be removed by bribes, that they interposed between foreigners and a voyage in Holy Russia.

And I, in my simplicity— but no matter! The sequel will sufficiently explain Zaninzki's extraordinary interest in my getting clear off from the Czar's realms without let or hindrance.

The two hours which routine imposed as a probation for all intending travellers were about the most tedious I ever remember to have spent. Luggage was rigorously examined, trunks and valises were unlocked, searched, and locked again, only to be opened a second and a third time for the satisfaction of some superior officer of police, who tapped each box in quest of a false bottom, explored every portmanteau for contraband stores behind the lining, and suspected every desk of being replete with secret drawers full of treasonable correspondence. Each of these troublesome zealots had to be feed on a scale proportioned to his rank, and the chinking of silver and the rustling of rouble notes were perpetual. Then followed the inspection of passports, which was severe and wearisome to a degree, and the various processes of identification, verification, &c., every one of which demanded a great amount of waiting in stove-heated rooms with sanded floors, much staring and many rude questions, and a fee at every fresh stage of the proceeding.

To an Englishman, accustomed at home to take his ticket and jump into a railway carriage, without leave or licence from any authority more awful than a booking-office clerk and a porter in corduroy, all this was peculiarly odious. But a countryman of my own, a merchant long settled at St. Petersburg, who was going on business to Moscow, and with whom I had some slight acquaintance, told me that the police were more on the alert than usual, owing to a detected conspiracy for exciting a wide-spread revolt, not only in Poland, but in the partially Russianized provinces of Lithuania and Podolia.

"A mere *fiasco*—a wretched breakdown, as every attempt of the sort has proved since I have known the country," said Mr. Jennings, who was, like most of the rich mercantile community established at St. Petersburg, a firm believer in the invincibility of the Czar's government, at least as against domestic foes; "but it gives these rogues in uniform an excuse for extra strictness. I believe myself that the Emperor and his ministers have known of the plot and its collapse for some weeks past, but the newspapers have only just been allowed to mention it. There is a hot search after the ringleaders, poor wretches, for the apprehension of the chief of whom high rewards are offered: he is a Pole, of course, one Sabinski—Eh? another fellow to look at our passports? then we shall each be a rouble the poorer," said the merchant, laughing.

I had fancied—it must surely have been fancy—that Zaninzki, whose arm was linked in mine, winced at the mention of his countryman's name. After all, though no partisan, my friend was a Pole, and it was hardly wonderful that he should sympathize with the sorrows of his own race, though I had always heard him deplore their misguided efforts to subvert the Muscovite sway, which he regarded as an established fact.

Two or three travellers who were sparing of their coin, or whose papers were really unsatisfactory, were sent ignominiously back to the city, but the rest of us passed scathless through the ordeal. By my Polish colleague's advice I had been liberal, but not lavish enough to excite notice, in my administering of silver sops to the Cerberi of office; and my bran-new passport, with its spread eagles and high and mighty signatures, to whose ink the sand of the imperial bureau yet adhered, defied suspicion. So at last I wrung Zaninzki's hand as I said farewell, and ascended the steps of a first-class carriage.

Mr. Jennings was my companion, and the remaining seats, save one, were filled by Russian merchants of the higher guilds, going south to attend a winter market at Moscow. My attention was for a few moments directed to this vacant place, which the guard chose—why I could not guess—to keep empty, since he civilly hustled more than one grave-visaged Gospodin, who wished to occupy it, into a different compartment. But some remark of my countryman's soon turned my thoughts into other channels, and I forgot the vacant place.

"So you are going to have a look at Moscow in its winter costume, doctor? Not afraid of frostbite, eh?" said Mr. Jennings; and as I had no reason for keeping my engagement a secret, I told him briefly what my errand was.

"Soltoff!" said the merchant, "I don't know the name. Soltoff! Well, well, no man can have the Russian peerage at his fingers' ends, as some of our worthies at home have the British by heart; and of barons in especial there are such crops, that I may be excused for not knowing every '-off' and '-sky' in the country. But I have been twenty years in St. Petersburg society, and I have a long bead-roll of the names of their

nobility in my memory, where I dare say I might have stored away something more useful;—but Soltoff! Of what local government did you say he had been marshal? That might give me a clue.”

“I have not the least idea,” said I, smiling; and just then the slow-moving train stopped at a little station, and the obsequious guard ushered in a young officer, whose uniform was visible as his cloak of costly sables was accidentally opened on taking his place. This new comer bowed and smiled to us with great politeness, as foreign etiquette demands; but I did not much like the expression of the long, dark Mongolian eyes, cunning and restless, that looked forth from a flat, pale face, to which waxed moustaches, and hair daintily arranged beneath the braided forage cap, gave an air of dandyism. I never before saw a head that so reminded me of that of a serpent, and it was with instinctive repugnance that I turned away from the elegant stranger. Mr. Jennings seemed to be of much the same opinion, for he pencilled something on a card, and handed the card to me. I read as follows:—

“Depend upon it, that is the person the vacant seat was kept for. I know Russia. Give him—our neighbour—a wide berth, but don’t offend him. A wink is as good, &c.”

I nodded to Mr. Jennings, and thrust the card into my waistcoat pocket. The merchant’s well-meant warning was not lost upon me. Although my experience of Russian affairs was trivial when compared with his, I knew that social life in Muscovy was infested by spies in every grade and garb, and that the unscrupulous police Prefect of St. Petersburg had his emissaries in market, camp, and ball-room; some in the simple black of the Tchinn, to whom civil employment belonged, others in the greasy sheepskins of the mujik, and not a few in martial guise, epaulettes, and sparkling with cross and star of some desecrated order of chivalry. Strictly speaking, there was no reason why I should have feared the prying curiosity of any *mouchard* in the Czar’s pay. I had nothing to conceal. My errand was a lawful and harmless one. The most censorious of despots could hardly have cavilled at the common-place undertaking in which I was engaged. And yet so innate is a Briton’s abhorrence for treachery and deceit in any shape, that I shrank from the advances of our opposite neighbour as if he had been plague-stricken.

The officer, who persisted for some time in offering petty civilities to Mr. Jennings and myself, and whose frequent attempts to draw one or other of us into an animated conversation were thwarted in every instance, was not slow in perceiving the aversion which prudence compelled us to hide under a mask of cool politeness. He gradually grew silent, and his urbane smile changed to a cold and sneering expression, which sat more naturally on his thin lips than the former, while he wrapped his cloak more closely around him, and seemed to fall into a dozing condition of repose. His presence acted as a restraint upon any further discourse, but

once or twice I heard Mr. Jennings mutter to himself the name of "Soltoff," unconsciously, perhaps, and I guessed that he was still cudgelling his memory for the antecedents of my distinguished patient. And once, when the word was ejaculated with more than usual distinctness, I thought I saw the Russian opposite start forward; but if so, the motion was hardly perceptible, and his pale face showed no signs of intelligence.

Nothing worthy of remembrance occurred during the rest of the journey. We reached Moscow in due course, and there the motley population of the train dispersed, Mr. Jennings parting from me with a hearty pressure of the hand, and a kind wish that I might have "good luck and a pleasant trip," and the officer giving me a glance, as he left the station, that haunted me for some time, in spite of my efforts to ridicule the impression it had produced. It was not a look of anger, scorn, or derision; but it seemed to threaten, as the eye of a venomous reptile might threaten the prey on which it already gloated in prospect. If ever a glance spoke, that one was eloquent of future evil.

The house to which I caused myself to be driven by the bearded Istovostschik who secured my custom was a large mansion in a quiet street within rifle-shot of the Gostinnoi Dvor. It was not old, being one of those dwellings that had been constructed when the chief part of Moscow was rebuilt after the conflagration; but the climate was not favourable to the preservation of buildings, and already the walls were cracked, and the gay colours of the façade were dim. The whole house had a look of neglect and decay; but there was no lack of stove heat in the queer old parlour into which I was ushered; and if the cumbrous furniture, in stamped leather and faded Utrecht velvet, would have provoked the derision of the inhabitants of St. Petersburg, there was no sign of actual poverty. One thing struck me as curious: the lamp in front of the great picture of a saint—the indispensable adornment of an old-fashioned Russian room—was not burning. There was the niche, indeed, and the picture, from whose blackened canvas looked forth the beatified head of some St. Isaac or St. Nicholas, but the lamp was extinguished and untrimmed.

Before I had much leisure to meditate on this apparently trifling circumstance—trifling in my eyes, at least, though significant enough had I been able to appreciate the subtle links between cause and effect,—the door opened, and the rustle of a silken robe made me turn. A lady, young, dark, and beautiful, had entered the room; and as I started and bowed—awkwardly enough, I dare say—she extended her little white hand with a timid kindness of manner, saying in English,—

"Dr. Milner, let me introduce myself. I hope we shall be very good friends. Papa has been anxiously looking for your arrival."

The words were ordinary enough, but I cannot convey an idea of the charm with which they were spoken, the ring of that silvery voice, so musical and soft, or the peculiar witchery of the smile. And I, who had fancied the baron's daughter a pallid, flat-visaged damsel, over-dressed,

over-jewelled, and with the absurd affectation and arrogance that had characterized the bearing of most of such few noble Russian maidens as I had had the honour to hand through a quadrille! It was a most agreeable surprise to find that one under the same roof with whom I was to spend months or years was so utterly unlike the haughty belles of St. Petersburg. Julie Soltoff, with her slender girlish figure, so supple and fawn-like in its elastic grace, a complexion like that of a pinkish shell, softly merging into pure and healthy white, hair as dark as night, and the prettiest hazel eyes I had ever seen, was indeed worthy of Zaninzki's praises. She received me with the kindest hospitality, though with a sort of shy reserve that was unlike anything I had seen since leaving England. Poor girl! she was very young to bear the load of responsibility which the loss of one parent and the helpless condition of the other had cast upon her.

She rang the bell to order that refreshments should be immediately prepared for me, since my fast had been long, and I could not help admitting that I was unsentimentally hungry. In the mean time, should Ivan (Ivan was a superb *chasseur*, in a uniform fine enough for a field-marshal) show me to my room, or would I see papa at once? I chose the latter alternative.

"If the father be as agreeable as the daughter, I am indeed the luckiest of doctors," thought I, as I followed my fair conductress up-stairs. She softly opened the door of a room on the right, peeped in, and then saying, "Papa is awake," admitted me. In a large arm-chair, propped up by all sorts of pillows and cushions, wrapped and swaddled in flannel and brocade till he more resembled a monstrous bundle of clothes than a human being, reposed my patient. He had been asleep, no doubt, for the open book he had been reading lay on a table near, and his face was partly covered by a silk handkerchief. Mademoiselle Soltoff glided up to him, patting and arranging his pillows with her dexterous little hands, and murmured something to him in a coaxing tone, like the coo of a dove.

A growl was the answer, and the baron twitched away the handkerchief, adjusted his gold-mounted spectacles, and looked at me with rather a stupid expression, like that of one whose wits were still overweighted by drowsiness.

"The doctor! the doctor!" he muttered, in French; "aha, I forgot! the Englishman. Monsieur, you are welcome, very welcome."

And having said this, ungraciously enough, the veteran broke down utterly, and relapsed into a paroxysm of groaning, coughing, and struggling for breath, that shook his bulky person in a manner painful to witness.

"That dreadful asthma! Your cordial, papa dear? Pray support him while I pour it out, M. le Docteur. Thanks, how kind you are! He will be better soon," said Julie, flitting to and fro like an angel as she was, and ministering to her father's comfort with the thoughtful rapidity that is essentially a feminine gift. The fit, though violent, was brief, and I was then able to take a better survey of my patient. The baron was a

venerable old warrior, in spite of the grotesque profusion of wrappings, which I secretly resolved should be reduced by degrees. His snow-white hair fell thickly from beneath the tight skull-cap of black velvet, and mingled with a grizzly beard which shaded the lower part of a face that must once have been handsome. His crutches rested against his elbow-chair, and his feet were swathed in flannel, and carefully placed on a cushion of eider-down.

But his temper! Zaninzki had been within the mark when he said it was "none of the best." I had never in my life seen such a terrific old Turk in domestic life. He put me in mind of some gouty old commodore of the British theatre, who seldom speaks but to swear at his own tortured members or the awkwardness of his attendants. Baron Soltoff was as hard to please, as vehement, and as testy as the surliest naval hero that ever shivered his timbers on or off the stage. His language was shocking, I am sure, when thoroughly provoked; but as when excited he always broke into Russian, his vituperative epithets and wrathful imprecations were lost upon me. The very sound of them, however, was harsh and terrible, though asthma generally put a padlock on the ex-marshal's tongue, and his oaths ended in a paroxysm of coughing.

The old man's almost ferocious gruffness served to set off the exquisite gentleness and self-devotion of his beautiful daughter. Her filial tenderness, her untiring patience, the sweet kindness with which she humoured the whims of her suffering parent, filled me with admiration. And yet, even to her, the baron commonly spoke in the growling tone of a sulkea bear, while she was never weary of reading to him or waiting upon him. The baron was a very puzzling patient. He cared no more for the ordinances of medicine than for the maxims of the seven wise men. Indeed, he had been so used to command, that he expected his very doctor to cure him in a fashion of his own choosing. He would not obey my directions, and the only chance was to get Mademoiselle to coax him into compliance.

But that was not all. His very maladies cost me many a sleepless hour, so hard was it to reconcile my experience with what I could gather from so perverse a patient. That he was a martyr, as the phrase goes, to gout and rheumatism was beyond dispute. That he was in hourly torment from asthma of the worst sort was equally sure. But the symptoms were perplexing. His hands and feet, for instance, were not swollen to any extent that warranted the wrapping and swathing on which he insisted; and yet he roared aloud with pain if they were touched, so tender were those afflicted extremities. He was torn and convulsed by asthma, yet I could not discover, by the ordinary tests, any organic lesion of the lungs, the bronchial nerves, or the uvula, and was forced to regard the case as abnormal and peculiar.

The preparations for the journey to that southern clime which was to restore the invalid to comparative health, were complete; and within

twenty-four hours of my arrival at Moscow, the carriage, which had been provided with runners in lieu of wheels for convenience of sledging over the snowy roads, was brought out, duly provisioned, stored with warm clothing, portable stove, and so forth, and all was ready. We took our seats, I having my portable medicine chest ready to supply restoratives at short notice, in case of any sudden attack of severe illness; and the tall chasseur mounted his perch, while six wiry horses, under the guidance of postillions in lambskin jackets and high boots, were harnessed to the vehicle. It had been a troublesome business to get the old man satisfactorily settled in his corner; but it was done at last, and my wonder was that his humanity could repose under such a heap of furs and woollen without being smothered. Off we went, however; and when the guard at the gates had inspected and returned our passports, and we were clear of Moscow, I distinctly heard the baron give a great sigh of relief.

I need not dwell upon the details of a winter journey under favourable circumstances in Russia. The weather, although bitterly cold, was dry and clear, free from snowstorms, or those terrific gales which drive the loose snow before them, and which are as dreaded as the *kamsin* of Arabia. My own astonishment was, that although the temperature was often by day, and always by night, several degrees below zero, we found so little inconvenience from the cold. Well wrapped and well sheltered, we suffered nothing worth speaking of, and, contrary to my fears, the invalid seemed actually to derive benefit, both in health and spirits, from locomotion. The roads were in capital condition. We easily kept up a pace which in summer could never have been equalled, and there was something exhilarating in the rapid motion through the thin and frosty air. Even the merry jingle of the horses' bells, and the blithe songs of the drivers, had in them something that caused the blood to flow fast and pleasantly through the veins.

The inns were wretched enough, but we were forearmed against their deficiencies. The heavy imperials contained a quantity of bedding; we had a good store of provisions, which keep for ever at such a temperature; and we wanted from the landlords of the village hostelrys very little more than eggs and milk, houseroom, and a *samovar* of hot water, which they could always supply. The chasseur proved himself a most valuable servant; indeed, I was much pleased with this man, whose fine trappings had caused me at first to regard him as a mere popinjay, but who was indefatigable in attending on his master and mistress. This Ivan was a bronzed and bearded man of about forty, soldierly and sensible, and his management of the often sulky and brutal attendants at the wayside inns was worthy of all praise. He cajoled, bullied, wheedled, and compelled, all, as it seemed, at once, and proved himself an excellent courier. On one occasion, when he had been obliged to administer a sound cuff or two to a tipsy postillion, who refused to harness the relay of horses, I saw the Muscovite, as he fastened the rope traces, shake his fist stealthily

towards the tall chasseur, and heard him mutter Russian words which I knew to signify "Polish dog!"

No doubt the fellow had recognized the Sarmatian accent of the baron's servant, whom *I* had taken for a Russian of the true breed. But when I casually asked Ivan, that evening, if he were not a Pole, he reddened and stammered, and finally told me a long-winded story of his having been reared in Lithuania, though of Russian descent, and thus having probably picked up the Polish accent.

I have mentioned that the baron's health appeared to improve. Such was the case; and there were times when, during our nightly halt at the village where we were to pass the night, both his temper and condition seemed to be much the better for the change of scene. On these occasions we held some pleasant conversation together, and I was unable to deny that Zaninzki had been right when he said that the old General could be entertaining and instructive at times. Evidently the old man's mind was still vigorous, and his stock of information was by no means contemptible; while he could be courteous, and even amusing, until I hardly recognized my surly patient in the mild, well-read man of the world, with his rich store of personal anecdote. To be sure, these intervals were always brief; for the asthma or the gout would come on in redoubled fury, and the poor General would have to be led off, coughing and hobbling, to his own chamber.

But every day gave me fresh reason to admire and respect the truly angelic character of his daughter. Such patience; such love for a father whose nature had been soured and encrusted by suffering and disappointment; such kindness to all; so lively, and yet so modest and gentle a disposition, have seldom been united with such dangerous beauty as that of Julie Soltoff. In vain I tried to shut my eyes to the fact that my admiration bade fair to ripen into hopeless love,—hopeless, because the penniless doctor could not aspire to the hand of one who, in rank and wealth, was so very far above him. And yet—and yet—I shut my eyes to the blank future before me, and only suffered myself to enjoy the happiness of daily and hourly intercourse with so sweet a companion. Julie was sprightly and accomplished; and when, now and then, her father asked her to sing to him, her tones had a wondrous pathos, such as belongs to very few voices.

"If no snow falls to make the roads heavy for travelling, we shall be on Austrian ground in two days," said Julie, once; and her voice trembled, and there were tears in her eyes—I could not guess why.

On the way we, of course, had often to submit our papers to the inspection of the petty authorities, military or civil, of towns and villages.

On all such occasions I had been requested to take on myself the duty of attending to answer questions, the chasseur accompanying me in case the official should not speak French, as all military officers and high *employés* do. And the presence of an English doctor, coupled with the

sight of Ivan's gorgeous apparel, had always produced a strong impression on the starosts and captains of gendarmerie,—taught, as Russians are, to judge of the rank of travellers by externals.

And now we really approached the Austrian frontier, and hoped to sleep at a town in Galicia on the second night. That evening, as I was strolling about the inn-yard, smoking my cigar, and of course well wrapped up, though the cold was less than in the centre of Muscovy, I noticed a man in the Jewish gabardine and cap, talking to the postboys. The light of a lantern fell on his face,—a very remarkable face, and a very disagreeable one as far as expression went. I seemed to have seen it before. Surely yes; those long, narrow Mongolian eyes, so crafty and cruel; that clever, unwholesome face, that sneering mouth, had met my gaze before; but when and where? Determined to have a closer look at the man, I approached; but the fellow shuffled off, and was soon lost among the slimy lanes of the village. In vain I cudgelled my memory that night. Do what I would, I could not recall the time or place of my previous meeting with that unattractive Israelite.

We slept at Ostrog that night; and on the next day some snow fell, making the road less fit for quick posting, and we could get no farther than Kremenetz between morning and sundown. But on the next day the weather was fine, the distance short, and it was settled that we should dine at Krutvetz, the last place in Russia, and cross the Galician boundary that afternoon, so as to reach an Austrian garrison town named Zloczow by bedtime.

All that morning, as we rattled along, I could not help remarking that *Mademoiselle Soltoff* was in a strangely excited state. She was silent and talkative by fits and starts; her hand, when it touched mine, was burning hot, and there was a feverish flush on her cheek that alarmed me. She was constantly looking back, thrusting her head out of the window, and looking back like one who feared pursuit. And then she would beg me to urge the postillions to drive faster. All this was to me simply unaccountable; but I laid it to the score of female caprice.

We reached Krutvetz, ordered dinner, most part of which was to be furnished by our own stores, and almost immediately received a visit from the town major, who commanded the little frontier post. The latter worthy, having heard that a baron and a general had arrived, came, hat in hand, more to pay his respects than to examine our papers. The latter he glanced at, and returned with many civil words, then bowed himself out with due humility. And Ivan soon set dinner on the table, and announced that he had ordered the horses. In two hours we should be in Austria.

Julie could not eat. Her agitation increased, but she declared herself well, quite well, only eager to get on. And just then the landlord entered, bowing and apologizing for the liberty he was about to take. A new guest, he said, the Bishop of Benghazi, on his way to visit the Archbishop of Cracow,

had arrived. There was no vacant room in the inn fit for His Grandeur. Would we permit the bishop to dine in our apartment? The answer was affirmative; and the landlord retired, and soon returned, ushering in a slim ecclesiastic, in black soutane with violet buttons and braid, purple gloves, shovel hat, black skull-cap, spectacles, breviary,—all that a bishop should have. He was very glib and bland of speech, as many hierarchs are.

“A thousand pardons if he intruded. He should be wretched were he to *général* M. le Baron, or Mademoiselle, or their worthy English friend. He only desired to borrow a corner of the room, wherein to eat his hasty meal. Although of the Russian church, he hoped the baron had no antipathy to a poor ecclesiastic of Rome; a bishop, but, alas! a bishop *in partibus*, without flock, or see, or palace. Would Mademoiselle forgive his trespassing on us thus?”

All this time the Bishop of Benghazi kept drawing nearer to the table, bowing and smiling, but looking very keenly at the baron through his spectacles. The baron was seized with a dreadful fit of asthma, and laid down his knife and fork; and Julie, who had been making some answer of common-place politeness to the priestly intruder, sprang to her father's side. I, on my part, looked at the bishop, and a strange idea came into my head that he was not quite unknown to me; but I could not guess where we had met, if ever.

“I have some experience in these sad cases,” said the visitor; “allow me;” and he laid his hand tenderly on the General's shoulder, and bent forward to look into his face. The baron's cough grew worse.

But what was my amazement when the Bishop of Benghazi, suddenly clutching my patient by the throat with one hand, with the other made a snatch at the General's white locks, and in a moment tore the whole disguise away, wig and velvet cap, the false white beard, the gold-rimmed glasses, revealing to view a hale and handsome face, that of a soldierly man of thirty years of age. In the next instant, while Julie screamed wildly, this singular bishop drew a pistol, but he was in turn grappled with, and so violently that both combatants rolled on the ground, the pistol exploding in the struggle.

The next moments were so confused and startling that I can only remember how, as if by magic, the room was filled with Russian soldiers, some of whom led in poor Ivan, with his arms tied together, while the others seized and bound the unfortunate man whom I had hitherto known as Baron Soltoff. The false bishop had flung aside his cap and spectacles, and in his exulting face, as he gazed upon his captives, I recognized at once the Jew of the inn-yard, and the officer who had sat opposite to me in the train from St. Petersburg.

“It was cleverly planned, Count Theodore Sabinski, and the attempt to personate a Russian general does you and Madame infinite credit,” said the spy, who turned out to be no less a person than Captain Heckler, a favourite instrument of the Czar's. The murder was out. The baron

was no other than the detected Polish conspirator, trying to fly the empire in disguise, and assuming infirmities and age the better to escape detection. Zaninzki, as the reader must have guessed, was his accomplice, and I, as an Englishman, had been considered useful in getting the party safely across the frontier; and Julie—the devoted daughter, whose merits and beauty I had appreciated too much for my own peace of mind—was really the Countess Sabinski, and his wife. But I could forgive the deception in pity for her anguish of sorrow as they were led away to separate prisons, the prelude to banishment or death. As for myself, I was simply thrust across the frontier, to find, as Captain Heckler sneeringly said, “another political patient as I best might.”

OUR YOUNGEST BORN.

SHE was born when the brightness of morning
Betoken'd a beautiful day;
When winter and welcome old Christmas
Were chasing dull autumn away.

She was born when the brown nut had fallen,
When each wind scatter'd clouds of dead leaves;
When safe in the barns of the farmer
Were lying the gold-bearded sheaves.

She was born when the red-berried holly
Shone out from the evergreen tall;
And the mistletoe, sign of the season,
Was wreathed both in cottage and hall.

She was born at our holiest season,
When the Babe was sent down from above;
And our hearts all received her with welcome,
And gave her fond tribute of love.

J. L. B.

TIME'S CHANGES.

"It was about eight o'clock on the morning of the 19th January, 186-, when——"

How often have our readers met with a tale commencing as above, and have read it as a matter of course, never bestowing a thought upon the labour which has been lavished in bygone ages upon the reckoning of time, and its division into years, months, weeks, days, and the subdivisions thereof! We therefore propose to touch upon this subject, and to give some slight insight into the science of "horometry," as it is called.

Amongst the ancients, time, or rather, long periods thereof were reckoned in ways varying with the nation in whose history the necessity of computation might occur. For instance, in the Scriptures, so many generations were considered as the standard for expressing a period of years. Amongst the profane writers, also, we find that Hellanicus, in his history of the earliest kings and founders of cities—which, though no longer extant, is quoted and referred to by many ancient writers,—reckons the occurrence of events by the succession of the priestesses of Juno at Argos; others, again, reckon by the succession of the Ephori at Sparta, &c., &c.

In more modern times, even since the division of time into years, &c., much confusion has been caused by the custom which existed of each nation, sometimes also petty states, and even religious sects, establishing as an era some one particular occurrence, of importance to themselves indeed, but of hardly sufficient weight in the world to give a solid basis on which to found the general computation: hence arises much confusion and uncertainty in settling the exact period of occurrences to which various dates have been assigned by historians of various nations, while, in fact, each intends to specify the same identical date, reckoned each by his own era.

Thus we have the Olympiad of Coræbus, the foundation of Rome, the era of Nabonassar, &c., and more recently the Christian era, the Hegira, the era of Yezdegird, &c. Even of the Christian era, which is now the generally received standard of reckoning in the civilized world, there have been different computations, viz., from the conception, annunciation, birth, passion, and ascension of our Saviour; which explains the difficulty experienced by students of history in reconciling the dates given by writers of the Middle Ages.

With these few remarks we will at once pass to the subject of this paper, viz., the divisions of time.

To begin with the day, the word "day" is used in two senses: the first denoting the period of light as distinguished from that of darkness (artificial day); the second, the period of time comprised in the day and night, or, as it is called by horologists, the *Nycthemeron*.

The first division of time recorded is, as our readers well know, in Gen.

i. 5,—“ And the evening and the morning were the first day.” Amongst the ancient Jews the *nycthemeron* was commenced at sunset, being divided into twice twelve hours, viz., twelve for the day, whether long or short, and twelve for the night; thus its length differed (very slightly) with the sunsetting. These were called *temporary* hours. The ancient Romans also followed the same system, as do the Turks at the present day. The ancient Egyptians commenced the *nycthemeron*, as is done at the present day in Great Britain, France, Spain, and the generality of Europe, at midnight; unlike the latter-mentioned nations, however, they divided it into twenty-four equal parts, reckoning the hours from one to twenty-four. The Babylonians commenced the *nycthemeron* at sunrise, reckoning the hour immediately before its rising again as the twenty-fourth. These hours were called *Babylonic*. Until the middle of the 5th century A.U.C. the Romans only divided the day into sunrise, sunset, and mid-day, which latter period was marked by the appearance of the sun midway between the Rostra, or orator's place in the forum, and the Græcostasis, or place appointed for the reception of envoys and ambassadors from Greece and other foreign nations. The ancient Greeks divided the day and night into twelve parts each, which, of course, varied in length according to the time of year.

In the present day the Italians reckon the hours from one to twenty-four, commencing at sunset, as also do the astronomers of all nations, commencing at noon, or when the sun's centre is on the meridian; and this is called the *astronomical* day. The *civil* day begins variously in different nations, but still includes one whole rotation of the world on its axis, begin when it may. It has been a subject of controversy whether in different climates the days are of equal length throughout the year, but it has been proved that, when the sun is in the equinoctial, the day is shorter by 40 seconds than when he is in the tropics.

The division of the day into hours is very ancient. Herodotus tells us that the Greeks learned from the Egyptians how to divide it into twelve parts; but the division into twenty-four was not known to the Romans until after the commencement of the first Punic war, previously to which, as we have before stated, they regulated their days by the rising and setting of the sun. As we have seen that the Jews divided the *artificial* day or night into twelve parts each, and as the artificial day and night are only equal at the time of the equinox, it was at that time only that the hours of the day equalled those of night, or one twenty-fourth of the *nycthemeron*. Therefore, when it is stated, with reference to our Saviour's crucifixion and its attending circumstances, that the sixth hour was about noon, and the ninth hour about three in the afternoon, this can only be approximate, and not rigorously correct.

The origin of the computation of days by weeks or sevens is much disputed. Although it has existed amongst Eastern nations from time immemorial, it did not enter into the Greek calculations, they using

instead decades of ten days each ; and it was not introduced into Rome until A.D. 379. It has been thought to have arisen from the fact of the intervals between the moon's change of phases being about seven days ; more probable is it, however, that it is attributable to the seven planets, one of which being held to rule the first hour of the nycthemeron, was thought to exercise an influence over each day. This seems to be upheld by the fact that the names of the days of the week are derived from those of the planets. More likely still, however, would seem the hypothesis that the use of weeks proceeded from some tradition of the Creation existing amongst the nations of the East, and that a name was afterwards given to each of the seven days composing a week by the astrologers, from some fancied influence exerted by the planets over the first hour in each day.

Our Saxon ancestors named each day after their deified heroes who represented the ancient gods or planets, viz. :—

ENGLISH.	SAXON.	LATIN.
Sunday.	Sun.	Sol.
Monday.	Moon.	Luna.
Tuesday.	Tuesco.	Mars.
Wednesday.	Woden.	Mercurius.
Thursday.	Thor.	Jupiter.
Friday.	Friga, or Frea.	Venus.
Saturday.	Seatur.	Saturn.

But however the division may have arisen, it is certainly very ancient, as the Syrians, Egyptians, and most of the Oriental nations seem to have used it from the earliest ages, though it did not gain footing in the West until the introduction of Christianity. The Jews reckoned their days by sevens, after the law of Moses, which ordained that they were to work six days, and rest the seventh. They called the days of the week first, second, third, &c., and made the sixth the preparation for the seventh or sabbath. According to Dio Cassius, the Egyptians made Saturday the first day of the week, but after the flight from Egypt the Jews, through hatred of their oppressors, made it the last. The Jews had three kinds of weeks, viz., the week of days, the week of years, and the week of weeks of years, or seven times seven years, after which came the Jubilee.

From weeks we come to months, so called from the moon, by whose motions they were formerly regulated, being properly the time in which the moon runs through the zodiac. To the present day the Turks and Arabs reckon by what is called an *illuminative* month, *i. e.*, the interval between the first appearance of a new moon and that of the next following. The months in use amongst the Jews, Greeks, and Romans, prior to the time of Julius Cæsar, consisted alternately of twenty-nine and thirty days, and were called *civil lunar* months. Julius Cæsar introduced the *civil solar* months, which consisted alternately of thirty and thirty-one days, excepting one month per annum which consisted of twenty-nine days, but every fourth year of thirty days. Under Augustus Cæsar, the sixth month, hitherto called *Sextilis*, received the name of Augustus or August, in honour

of the Emperor, and a day was added to it out of compliment to him, which made it consist of thirty-one days, to compensate for which a day was taken from February, which reduced it to twenty-eight days, and twenty-nine every fourth year. They reckoned by Ides, Nones, &c., and to aid the student of Roman history who may be puzzled by that method of reckoning, we here subjoin a table of Ides and Nones. The Egyptians employed thirty days invariably, adding five supplementary days to complete the year. The Greeks divided their months into three decades.

Days of the Month.	March, May, July, October.	January, August, December.	April, June, Sept., Nov.	February.
1	Calendæ.	Calendæ.	Calendæ.	Calendæ.
2	6	4	4	4
3	5	3	3	3
4	4	Prid. Nonas.	Prid. Nonas.	Prid. Nonas.
5	3	Nonæ.	Nonæ.	Nonæ.
6	Prid. Nonas.	8	8	8
7	Nonæ.	7	7	7
8	8	6	6	6
9	7	5	5	5
10	6	4	4	4
11	5	3	3	3
12	4	Prid. Idus.	Prid. Idus.	Prid. Idus.
13	3	Idus.	Idus.	Idus.
14	Prid. Idus.	19	18	16
15	Idus.	18	17	15
16	17	17	16	14
17	16	16	15	13
18	15	15	14	12
19	14	14	13	11
20	13	13	12	10
21	12	12	11	9
22	11	11	10	8
23	10	10	9	7
24	9	9	8	6
25	8	8	7	5
26	7	7	6	4
27	6	6	5	3
28	5	5	4	2
29	4	4	3	Prid. Calend. Martii.
30	3	3	Prid. Calend.	
31	Prid. Calend.	Prid. Calend.		

Passing on to years, we find that the word "year" originally signified a *revolution*, and was not always limited to that of the sun; so that the years of some accounts are only to be reckoned as months, and sometimes as periods of three or four months. This hypothesis will explain the accounts of the antiquity of some nations, and perhaps, also, the long duration of human life as related in the Scriptures, and in the writings of ancient profane authors. In several of the old Greek writers we are told that the Egyptian year at one period was only a space of time corresponding to our month; and it is far from improbable that the children of

Israel pursued the method of reckoning used by their captors. Nearly two thousand years ago the Egyptians boasted of traditions extending back over a period of forty-eight thousand years, and without the above hypothesis concerning the comparative shortness of their years, we are at a loss to reconcile this account with the received opinion of the date of the Creation. The modern acceptation of the term *year*, or *solar year*, as it should properly be designated, is the time in which the sun moves through the twelve signs of the ecliptic. This contains 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 45·5 seconds, or, according to the Gregorian calendar, 365 days, 5 hours, 49 minutes; but the year is popularly accounted to contain 365 days, and 366 every fourth year. The changes of the seasons seem to have given occasion for the formation of years, for it was found that they were to be accounted for by the proximity or distance of the sun, and so the name of year was given to the space of time in which he performed his whole course. We are told by Herodotus that the Egyptians first formed the year, making it to contain 360 days. Hermes Trismegistus added five days to the account; but the year varied with different nations, owing to the very imperfect state of astronomical instruments in those days, and the consequent difficulty of calculating the sun's course. Confusion may also have arisen from the discretionary power which was left with the pontiffs of intercalating more or fewer days, according as the year was found to differ more or less from the celestial motions, and which power was afterwards much abused to serve political purposes,—to such an extent, indeed, that at the time of Julius Cæsar the civil equinox differed from the astronomical by three months, so that the winter months were carried back into autumn, and the autumnal into summer.

The year now in common use descends to us from the Roman calendar, which was formed by Romulus, who divided the year into ten months, or 304 days. This Style was reformed by Numa, who added the months of January and February, making the year to commence on January the 1st, and to consist of 355 days. But as this was evidently less than the true year, he ordered an addition of forty-five days every four years,—that is, every two years a month of twenty-two days between February and March; and at the end of every two years more, another month of twenty-three days. This month was called *Marcedonius*. Julius Cæsar further reformed the calendar, whence arose the Julian, or Old Style. He divided the year into 365 days, but every fourth year into 366, adding a day to the 23rd of February, which being the sixth of the calends, and counted twice, gave the name of *Bissextile* to what we call *Leap-year*.

This Style was furthermore reformed by Pope Gregory XIII., from which arose the New Style. The Julian year was eleven minutes too long, which makes about three days surplus in 400 years. Gregory ordained that a day should be omitted in each of three centuries out of four. The New Style commenced in Catholic countries on October 4th, 1582, when ten days were omitted at once, being the time overrun since the Council at

Nice in 325. But in England it did not commence until 1752, when eleven days were omitted, September 3rd being counted as the 14th.

Since then another day has been omitted, so that our Style differs from the Old by twelve days. In England (previously to 1752) the year was reckoned to begin on March 25th;* but by an edict, published in that year, the commencement was altered to January 1st. By the New Style, the extra day which used to be intercalated between the 22nd and 23rd of February every fourth year is not introduced by counting the 23rd twice over, but is added to the end of the month; therefore in leap-year February contains twenty-nine days.

Having now taken as complete a view of the divisions of time as our space will allow of, and which is but very superficial at best, we must leave our readers to follow up the subject at their leisure, assuring them that whatever time they may devote to the study will neither be unprofitably nor unamusingly spent.

HENRY J. B. HANCOCK, F.R.S.

* Though the *Civil* year did not commence until March 25th, the *Historical* year was held to commence on January 1st, which accounts for the double dates so often met with previously to 1752. The months of January, February, and up to the 25th of March, belonged both to the *end* of the old *Civil* year, and the *beginning* of the new *Historical* one; consequently, dates occurring in these months were written as follows, *e. g.*, February 13th, 1745-1746, or 1745-6, or 174½.

THE POACHER'S WARNING.

[The scene of the following tale is in the immediate neighbourhood of Rugby, Warwickshire. The facts here mentioned are substantially true, and can be attested by many inhabitants to whom they are well known.]

By Rookby's tower, so old and grey
 (Oft is the story told),
 Some thirty years or more ago
 There dwelt a poacher bold.

A man he was of stalwart frame,
 A brawny, reckless wight;
 The wassail bowl, the midnight fray,—
 These were his heart's delight.

Life was to him no solemn thing,
 Hallow'd by purpose high;
 He never felt the still delight
 Of holy company.

Well could he ply his lawless craft,
 Could use the gun or snare;
 But in the field or in the wood,
 He saw no beauty there.

He watch'd the clouds in the varying sky
 And knew their lightest sign;
 But the fair heaven spake nought to him
 Of hope or love divine.

The hallowing sound of Sunday bells
 Brought to his soul no rest;
 And fast and feast day glided by,
 Alike to him unblest.

The voice of worship from his lips
 For years had never gone;
 And the trampling of all evil thoughts
 Had made his heart like stone.

Upon a moonlit night it chanced
 This man did homeward go;
 Behind him toil'd his faithful dog,
 With weary step and slow;—

Weary and slow, for long and far
Their midnight march had been ;
And the poacher's bag, with varied spoil,
Was amply fill'd, I ween.

When, as he cross'd the gentle brook
That marks the parish bound,
Adown the hill with measured pace
A dim procession wound.

It was a funeral band that came,
Bearing the solemn dead :
The strong man shudder'd as he *saw*
Those bearers' noiseless tread.

Nearer the shrouded coffin comes,
Nearer the mourners glide ;
Now he can see the faces plain ;—
The dog crept to his side.

He sees them plain, he knows them all,
His friends and comrades dear ;
His sturdy knees together knock,
Sinks his bold heart with fear.

The night-wind raised the funeral pall ;—
He fell on the cold, cold stone :
For he read the name on the coffin's lid,—
O God ! it was his own !

The streamlet blithely prattled on ;
The moon shone pure and still :
The damp dew settled on his head,
But he heeded not the chill.

Long time he lay. Such horror deep
Counts not the passing hour ;
He feels the dog caress his hand,
And, staggering, vainly strives to stand,—
His limbs have lost their power.

THE POACHER'S WARNING.

He sat beside the dark green bank,
Where the still water sleeps,
And one faint star shone in his heart :—
Dear Lord ! he weeps, he weeps,

A healing shower,—that hard, dry man,
Who had never shed a tear
Since the days when he told his childhood's grief
To a fond mother's ear.

Came holy words into his mind,
Who had never breathed a prayer
Since the days when he knelt at his mother's knee,
And lisp'd his worship there.

He reach'd his home by morning's light,
And laid him down to rest ;
But the spectre train still fill'd his eye,
And terror held his breast.

He felt that, for some purpose good,
That vision dread was given ;
Sure 'twas a blessed warning sent
In mercy from high heaven.

He sent for the Priest, (oh, ne'er had he
Such message sped before !)
And the good man's blessing soon was given
Within the cottage door.

A heavy task that pastor had,
To win, to teach to pray ;
For the poacher's days were number'd,
And ill deeds done, and ill words said,
And life in wanton pleasure sped,
All on his conscience lay.

Six days he linger'd ; on the next
They told him he must die :
His cheek is bright with contrite tears,
And hope beams in his eye.

THE POACHER'S WARNING.

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The mourners came,—the very train
The living man had seen ;
Only the glaring sun shone now,
And not the moon serene.

They bore him to the calm churchyard,
The words of hope they said ;
Carved "Jesu, mercy," on the stone ;
Left him to sleep till the Trumpet's tone
Shall wake the slumbering dead.

No traveller wends by Soubrook Hill,
Where the gentle waters roll,
But thinks of the tale, and speeds the prayer,
God rest the Poacher's soul !

W. J. D.

THE SCIENCE OF GOOD CHEER.

PART I.

"Mettre au rang des beaux arts celui de la cuisine."—BERCHOUX.

"The pleasant, savoury smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taste it."—MILTON.

"'Tis an old art, that of cookery, for it goes back as far as Adam," says the Marquis de Cussy; and "*elle naquit en même temps que le monde*," Grimond tells us,—which is certainly investing it with the highest claim to prehistoric antiquity. With all due deference to both these genial gastronomes, we should rather define the pursuit in its early and rudimentary state as a pseudo-science, and call it gastrology. For gastrology empirically heralded gastronomy, just as astrology preceded the true science—astronomy. A long course of experiment in the mastication of badly cooked meals must undoubtedly have been required for the advance of the first, as of observation and calculation to establish data for the last. Gastronomy, indeed, is identical with civilization, as there could have been no civilization without that most interesting of the physical sciences—the culinary; and that fact the late Mr. Buckle has satisfactorily shown, when treating upon the earliest civilizations of Asia and Africa.

The sciences are not like Minerva, who started, armed at all points, from the brain of Jupiter. They are the offspring of Time, and are formed insensibly by the collection of methods pointed out by experience, and at a later day by the principles deduced from combination of those methods. In the course of the last sixty years many new sciences have taken their places in the cycle of human knowledge. Gastronomy has at last appeared, and all her sisters have received her with open arms. And what could be refused to that which sustains us from the cradle to the grave, which increases the pleasures of love and friendship, which disarms enmity, facilitates business, and offers us in our short span of life the only enjoyment which, not being followed by fatigue, recruits us for a phase of fresh enjoyment?

Doubtless, so long as the *cuisine* was entrusted to the hands of ordinary cooks, it remained, like other empirical pursuits, in an imperfect state,—in other words, as a pseudo-science, as we have said. But when men of real science, like Liebig, took it up, they examined, analyzed, and classified the different alimentary products, and reduced them to their simple elements. They fathomed the mysteries of assimilation, and, following inert matter through all its changes, have discovered how it might preserve existence. They watched diet in all its passing or permanent effects—daily, monthly, for a whole life. They anticipated its influence even on the mind, as regards the effect produced upon it by the senses, as well as its powers when the senses are dormant; and from all these labours a grand theory

has been deduced, which embraces the whole of mankind, and every portion of creation endowed with animal life.

We do not venture to assert, with a Russian gastronome, that "of all sciences, none is more worthy of our attention and respect than gastronomy;" but we are not unimpressed with the reflection that it is a branch of human knowledge of the highest importance, and which ought not to be considered as treating of what is gross and vulgar; that it has shared in the prosperity and in the misfortunes of the human race—for the destiny of nations depends on the manner in which they are fed; that it is greatly subservient to hygiene, and that it will endure to the consummation of time.

The subject, we are aware, has been treated both archæologically and as a branch of social science, pure and simple. We have no intention of entering *ex professo* upon the constituents of food, and its treatment, but rather viewing good cheer as regards its close connection with manners, the growth of luxury, or obstacles to comfort, and its general bearing upon civilization.

Cookery, like every other species of civilization, had its birthplace in the East. This is naturally attributable to the fact of the edible products of those prolific regions being associated with the spices which Nature has there so widely distributed.

The most ancient writers speak of the banquets of the kings of the East. It is easily to be imagined, that monarchs reigning over lands rich in every produce, especially in spices and perfumes, should maintain a sumptuous table; but details are wanting. We only know that Cadmus, who introduced letters into Greece, was formerly cook to the King of Sidon.

The first great feasts, therefore, we read of in history, were in those oriental regions, which the Creator had allotted to be the cradle of civilization. Thence Athens sprang, and became, as soon as born, the culminating point whence the loftiest intelligence emanated. A gay, volatile, active-minded, quick-witted race, entirely unfettered by the material necessities of existence, the burden of which fell upon its slaves, there opened a school wherein the first polished civilization was developed. The Deipnosophists of Athenæus, and the comedies of Aristophanes, show us how their sages, poets, artists, *beaux-esprits*, and fine gentlemen feasted and talked. It was at those repasts that Athenian conversation became famous for its wit and instruction—a conversation that has afforded a model for that of every polished circle in after ages.

The truly "wise men" of Greece, therefore, were not always devoted to rigid abstinence. Spartan broth was not always in the ascendant. They all more or less honoured gastronomy, as one of the most delightful of enjoyments, and the most lasting of excitations. They wrote treatises upon it, and notably the lively-minded and far-travelled Archestratus, the Carême of Athens, not only did much for the culinary theory, but rapidly advanced its practice. He traversed on foot the most fertile countries of

the Old World, to examine on the spot the various edible products of its different latitudes. A thousand precious assimilations for the palate and health were the result.

The discovery was then made that every nation which had shone brilliantly, either in the dawn or apogee of its civilization, had evinced a disposition to take gastronomy as the compass wherewith to steer across unknown seas, in order to carry that humanizing element still further for the benefit of mankind.

This enterprising Greek, then, had compassed sea and land to bring back to Athens—that focus of refined intelligence—everything more or less adapted to culinary purposes. His biographers speak alike highly of his quick and delicate wit, and of his altogether voracious appetite. He ate enormously, and digested excessively fast. Happy and wonderful man! In him we recognize the most ancient professor of cookery; and not only was he the first expert, but, for the eternal honour of the science, he combined in himself an omnivorous appetite with a stomach of steel, and a conversation sparkling with wit, pleasantry, and instruction. Notwithstanding all his exertions, however, Athens never achieved the honour of a first-rate *cuisine*, and the reason was that she sacrificed too much to sweets, fruits, and flowers. She could neither boast of the cakes of fine flour of the Rome of the Cæsars, nor its Italian spices—its cunningly concocted sauces, nor its delicate white wines from the sunny slopes of the Rhine. Luxurious surroundings, splendour, and the various modes of enlivening a feast, by the performance of hired dancers, mimes, and buffoons, were, however, at best but poor substitutes for gustatory excellence. When Alcibiades, that *beau idéal* of an Athenian gentleman, fled from the hostility of his countrymen to Persia, and accepted the hospitality of the treacherous Pharnabazus, a revelation of the luxuriousness of Oriental civilization is afforded us in the glimpses we get of the illustrious exile's daily habits, thus recorded by an eye-witness:—

“He leads the same life as he did at Athens, or, rather, worse. Every evening, four or five lovely Iberians fan him gently to rest, and one or two remain beside his couch, to watch lest anything should disturb his slumbers. The plumage of Indian birds furnishes the down of his bed, their nests his most delicious nourishment, and the lampreys of far-distant seas have displaced the horrible black sauce. He eats off ivory tables, and out of vessels of gold. Nard—an odoriferous plant from which the Orientals derive their most exquisite perfumes—fills every chamber with its fragrance. His purple vestments are stiff with gold. And when at times he contemplates the voluptuous, perfume-breathing, resplendent Persian into which he is transformed—with his table service encrusted with gems (and what viands to match it!)—his bath of essences—his feet treading upon Tyrian carpets—music lulling him to repose—music awakening him from slumber, he cannot refrain from laughing outright at the excess of his effeminacy.”

Here we have, therefore, an apt illustration of that pompous Persian extravagance which Horace denounced in the ode,—

“Persicos odi, puer, apparatus:
Displacent nexæ, philyra coronæ:
Mitte sectari, rosa quo locorum
Sera moretur.”

Though perfumery bore a high price at Athens, this did not hinder voluptuaries from using it very profusely. The following fashion of scenting his guests at table, adopted by a man of pleasure, a rival of Alcibiades in whimsical luxury, almost excuses its extravagance by its ingenuity:—

“Nor fell
His perfumes from a box of alabaster;
That were too trite a fancy, and had savour'd
O' the elder time; but ever and anon
He slipp'd four doves, whose wings were saturate
With scents, all different in kind—each bird
Bearing its own appropriate sweets:—these doves,
Wheeling in circles round, let fall upon us
A shower of sweet perfumery, drenching, bathing
Both clothes and furniture; and, lordlings all,
I deprecate your envy when I add,
That on myself fell floods of violet odours.”*

The Romans had sent a deputation to Athens to bring back the laws of Solon. They went again to study literature and philosophy. Whilst polishing their manners, they became acquainted with the pleasures of the table; and with orators, philosophers, rhetoricians, and poets,—cooks arrived at Rome.

In time, when Rome became the centre of the wealth of the world, the luxury of the table was carried to a degree almost incredible. From the locust to the ostrich, from the dormouse to the wild boar, everything was tasted. The dormouse was esteemed as a delicacy. Sometimes scales were placed on the table to verify its weight. Martial wrote an epigram on the subject:—

“Tota mihi dormitur hyems, et pinguior illo,
Tempore sum, quo me nil nisi somnus alit.”

The whole world was placed under contribution by armies and travellers. Truffles and Guinea-fowls were imported from Africa, rabbits from Spain, pheasants from Greece, and peacocks from the remotest parts of Asia. The opulent Romans vied with each other in the glory of having beautiful gardens, where they cultivated not only the fruits formerly known—as apples, pears, figs, and grapes,—but fruits introduced from foreign lands—

* Aristophanes, “The Acharnians,” act iv., scene v.

as the apricot from Armenia, the peach from Persia, the quince from Sidon, strawberries from the valleys of Mount Ida, and the cherry, the conquest of Lucullus in Pontus. These importations, which necessarily took place under various circumstances, prove at least that the impulse was general, and that every man had it at heart to contribute to the enjoyments of good cheer.

At Rome they fared better than at Athens, and often talked no less wittily. Her first banquets, imitated from the Greeks, and prepared by cooks who had studied in the Attic capital, were charming, though excessively sensual affairs. The Greek models were fairly distanced. But in the time of Sylla, Pompey, Lucullus, and Cæsar, Roman gastronomy was at the head of the march of sciences. From that period the patricians ate daintily and splendidly. Those who could so afford to fare might, indeed, have devoured the produce of the entire earth, of which they were then the ravagers, proprietors, despots, and lawgivers; and it must be set down as an incontestable fact, any opinion to the contrary, that these lords of all below, so grave in the senate, so fierce in the battle-field, became delicate and polished gentlemen whilst enjoying the pleasures of the table, and conversed no less admirably than did the Athenians before them. The Roman mind also took a tone more positive, bolder, and original, and the maturity of social ideas was plainly perceptible in it. Gastronomy, then—and this is a notable and important fact—came to afford at intervals rest and peace in the rapid march of war to that nation born for conquest, and plunged in struggles and enterprises the vastest ever undertaken by man.

The Emperor Augustus, like his uncle, the great Julius, practised moderation. He loved the magnificence of the table for its political influence, and for the worthy reception of his friends. The same motives first led Alexander the Great to make good cheer; and so long as he worked his mind and was urged onwards by great ideas, he ate very sparingly. But when at length even the lofty intelligence of an Alexander stooped to licentious indulgence at Persepolis and Babylon, it eclipsed all others in those suppers, the echo of whose orgies has reached us through the lapse of two thousand years. Alexander was not the man to commit a trivial folly. One night he proposed a reward for that guest who should drink the most: thirty-six of the toppers died in the course of the following day.

We are indebted to the Romans for after-dinner songs and grand carvers. These officers were very highly esteemed, those of Lucullus receiving a salary equal to eight hundred pounds a year. The convivial Romans were not less instructed in table lore than the Greeks, but the order of their feasting was more varied, and at the same time more substantial and elevated. When the wines which they appreciated—drier and more piquant than those of Chios and the slopes of Cape Misenum—had sufficiently animated them, their conversation took a more lively tone—

energetic and truly Roman. They rejoiced in an unbounded luxury of furniture, gilding, and carpets; they loved to eat at brilliantly lighted tables, seated, like the Greeks, beside the loveliest women of their nation. Twenty courses, entirely changed, scarcely interrupted conversation. Each guest brought his own perfumes, and was waited upon by his own slaves. The service, though minute in detail, was rigorously elegant. Fresh flowers accompanied every course, and a herald proclaimed in a loud voice the quality of the viands served up. At short intervals, the perfumes were revived or renewed in the atrium; and music played from time to time. Lucullus and Pompey had table officers who possessed secret means of reanimating appetite, of raising the tone and assisting the functions of the stomach. These feasts were excessively costly; rare specimens of both the winged and finny tribes were served thereat in the greatest profusion. Lucullus expended upon his hospitalities the enormous rapine with which he had enriched himself in the course of his conquests.

An immense amount of labour and intelligent study must have been gone through to reach that degree of alimentary manipulation which the Romans had attained towards the end of the Republic; generations of cooks, almost entirely of Greek origin, were used up in the pursuit. The masters of the science were held in high consideration. Apicius created a sect through the discovery of the means of preserving oysters fresh. Rome, after naturalizing the Grecian *cuisine*, adopted, along with the foreign Pantheon, the various cookeries of the universe. All took refuge in her lap of luxury; and through their cookery alone, the civilized nations, though conquered and cast down, still preserved a breath of life in the world's metropolis. Carthage, for instance, which the Romans rebuilt under Augustus with the name of New Carthage, close by its original site, was re-established solely by them, says Erasmus, on account of its ancient *cuisine*, and the exquisite taste shown by its artists in all that concerned table ornamentation,—chasings in gold and silver, lightness of design and elegant fashion of furniture, and the beauty of their tables, encrusted with gems and gold.

Gastronomy received signal honours under nearly all the Cæsars. We have most of us read the account of the famous deliberation of Domitian, related so incisively in Juvenal's satire. We there behold the son of Vespasian and brother of Titus, the master of the known world, assembling in all haste, in the dead of night, the "conscript fathers," still trembling at the injunction which had just been given them, to repair instantly to the palace to confer with the Emperor.

The cause of that nocturnal summons turned out to be the Emperor's anxiety to ascertain the best mode of cooking a fine turbot, which had arrived from Ischia, and upon that point the Cæsar had declined taking the imperial initiative before the majesty of culinary science.

Suetonius tells us, also, that one day the husband of that bad Empress Agrippina, Claudius—when seated on his tribunal, and whilst an important

cause was being pleaded before him—suddenly assumed a grave and pre-occupied look, and made a sign imposing silence. Obedient to the gesture, the entire auditory was immediately hushed, and even the advocates held their tongues. The Emperor remained for a few moments buried in profound thought. Everybody continued dumb, and listened expectantly. What could possibly be the nature of such deep reflections? Of what was he thinking? What was he going to say? Such were the questions which mentally suggested themselves to all around him. But their uncertainty ceased at length, when Claudius opened his mouth, and exclaimed, with energy, "O my friends, what capital things little patties are! We will eat some, won't we, at dinner to-day?" That sudden snapping of a link in the chain of argument during a long and important pleading is at once a fact so truly amusing, as to make us regret that it is recorded of so stupid a person as Claudius, who was not worthy of being handed down to posterity as exhibiting himself, though for once only, in the character of a lively gourmand.

One more curious fact. Antony one day, happening to be much pleased with his dinner, rewarded his master cook by presenting him with a city. Pleasant times for cooks! One might as well have been a cook as a statesman in those days.

In the fifteenth century, in the time of St. Chrysostom, that genial science, the culinary, which had made so many days under the empire worthy of being "marked with a white stone," became, alas! extinct; its odour having stimulated from afar off the appetite of the barbarians; who, in hungry hordes, rushed from the sterile North to invest Rome, and invade its splendid kitchens. All was lost! not a spark was left smouldering within them wherewith to recall their former triumphs. And this fact of the irresistible march of barbaric races towards the centres of civilization is attributable to the same cause which had set in motion various other populations from the earliest ages downwards; for ancient history, strictly speaking, presents little else than a continual panorama of ethnical dislocations brought about primarily by hunger and sensuality. The barbarians succeeded each other for a long period, like wave on wave; and after the northern hordes came the Arabs, the denizens of the desert, with its parched sands and starry skies. But to these wine was forbidden by the Koran; and, unable to retain their footing steadfastly in the south of Europe, they were continually constrained to retrace their steps.

Those consecutive incursions, continuing for centuries, ushered in at last the long, profound night of the Dark Ages. The period, indeed, comprising the fall of the Roman empire and the greater portion of the Middle Ages was one of unmitigated darkness for the fine arts. "When there is no cookery in the world," says Carême, "farewell to letters, elevating and rapid intelligence, high inspiration, endearing relations. Social unity, in fact, perishes." Happily, some scraps of the universal

gleaning in culinary lore were flung, as it were by the winds, on to heaps of other manuscript treasures garnered in the cloister. There the intellectual fuel was not long suffered to rot as useless. The good monks rekindled new beacons with it along the drear and gloomy waste, and these diffused their vivifying rays over new societies, and made them fecund.

Charlemagne, as appears from his capitularies, took a warm personal interest in the management of his table; and the Normans, a century or two later, are said to have prided themselves on their superior taste and discrimination in this respect. In the time of our Norman kings, the nobles, Sir Walter Scott tells us, "while indulging themselves in the pleasures of the table, aimed at delicacy, but avoided excess, and were apt to attribute gluttony and drunkenness to the vanquished Saxons, as vices peculiar to their inferior station."* But the revival of cookery, like that of learning, is due to Italy. Genoa, Venice, Florence, Milan, were centres that witnessed a new birth of the noble passion for art in general, and which became opulent cities, resuscitated by commerce, to which the science of gastronomy was largely ancillary.

The Adriatic and Mediterranean now once more owned a civilized race for their masters, and again offered up their piscatory treasures. This revived *cuisine* was that of the rich *Middle Ages* of Italy—of Italy once more mistress of the East. It was no longer an imitation of Greece or Rome; neither was it a refocillation of the insipid dietetics of Byzantium, with its cloying sweetmeats and luscious wines: but the legitimate science infinitely extended; that science which comprehended both the palate and stomach of man,—that is, of the man of that epoch, placed as he was between the last terminal point of barbarism and the first starting-post of modern civilization—an epoch characterized alike by the solidity and elasticity of the digestive functions.

Italy ate, therefore, once more upon scientific principles, and rejoiced in admirable repasts. Gastronomy met with the most enlightened encouragement from the merchant princes of Florence, Genoa, and Venice, those "city republics," monopolizing, as they then did, the vast traffic between Europe and Asia; while her nobles and "potent, grave, and reverend signiors" of Church and State summoned the *science of Good Cheer* to add the charm of hospitality to the sumptuous magnificence of their marble palaces: and that science entered the sculptured portals hand in hand with letters and polished manners. It made its reappearance as suddenly as did eloquence, poetry, and the fine arts—witness the palaces of D'Este, of De Medici, of Leo X. and the cardinals; and so the *cuisine* advanced with rapid strides, step by step with civilization generally, and both by its enlargement and progress signalized the power and profundity of the Christian mind.

Among the enlightened gastronomers of the sixteenth century we

* "Ivanhoe," chap. xv.

shall find Leonardo da Vinci, Tintoretto, Titian, Paul Veronese, Baccio, Raphael, Guido-Reni, and others of the same craft. Note well, that in this same sixteenth century the higher class of minds conceived man in his intelligent humanity as a superior and different being to what he had hitherto been. They created and portrayed a sumptuousness more grandiose than any preceding, more artistic and richer in its details. That delicate and curious costliness realized by Carême upon the tables of the nineteenth century, those great artists presented or indicated in their dissertations, letters, pictures, and cartoons. The usages they thus contributed to engraft upon Italian society, transplanted to France and England, banished those of our rough ancestors,—usages which taught us how to sit at table, to range our guests, how to eat, and how to talk whilst eating—not so very easy a thing as many folks imagine.

The French received the first rudiments of the science from the professors who accompanied Catherine de' Medici to Paris. It is clearly established that they introduced the use of ices into France. *Fricandeaux* were invented by the *chef* of Leo X. There is also good reason to believe that culinary science had made some progress in England, as Cardinal Campeggio, one of the legates charged to treat with Henry VIII. concerning his divorce from Catherine, drew up a report on the state of English cookery as compared with that of Italy and France, probably by the express desire, and for the especial use, of his Holiness the Pope. Henry, moreover, was a liberal rewarder of that sort of merit which ministered to the gratification of his appetites; and on one occasion he was so transported with the flavour of a new pudding that he gave a manor to the inventor.

It was under the last Valois, Henry III., that the more elegant delicacies of the Italian table were brought into France. The table-cloth was folded and plaited like the frills of the time of Francis I. and the invention of diplomacy,—both being contemporaneous. Next, a regular plan or drawing was prepared daily for the dinner-service of this royal sybarite, and submitted for his approval and that of his minions. Henry rejoiced in a quarrelsome set of spoiled favourites, and one of their childish tricks was to cut the table-cloth suddenly by way of challenging some person present to meet them in a private duel. It was looked upon as so deadly an affront that the sword alone could avenge it. The dining-room was almost always the largest apartment of the castle or mansion. The walls were hung with largely-designed tapestry; the floor was strewn, in winter, with hay, straw, or rushes, and fresh leaves in summer. The table stood usually on the *haut pas*, or raised step, across the top of the hall, and at one end of it was placed the *dresser* or buffet, as it was called in the fifteenth century, and *credence* in the sixteenth. On this were ranged in order the more costly articles of plate, cups, basins, and vases enriched with precious stones. Many royal and noble personages had three dressers,—one for objects in silver, another for those termed parcel-

gift, and a third for those of gold. Most of this plate was only meant to be looked at,—paraded by way of ornament; for the embossed sculpture and *repoussé* designs, charming as they were as works of art, would have proved very inconvenient in use, by retaining in their grooves and indentations the sauces of certain meats, and very inimical to the edges of knives and capacities of spoons.

At one period, the moment of sitting down to table, in the mansions of princes and great nobles, was announced by the blowing of a horn. This was called *corner l'eau*, because before sitting down the hands were washed. The French poets of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries make frequent mention of this custom. Every gentleman, however, had not the right of having dinner announced by a flourish on the horn; that being a privilege appertaining only to persons of the very highest distinction. Washing hands before meals was never omitted, and at the tables of the higher nobility scented water, especially rose-water, was commonly used. The towel and basin were brought to the ladies by squires or pages. To royal personages they were held by the Grand Chamberlain, without some one of high distinction were present, to whom that officer delegated his function.

The guests in those days sat upon benches, sometimes high, sometimes low, accordingly as the height of the table required. From bench (*banc*) the word banquet was derived. Henry III. of France introduced the use of arm-chairs and other single seats, during his repasts, in the place of benches. Table napkins are a modern invention. The first were made at Rheims, and presented by that city to Charles VII., on the occasion of his coronation there.

Forks, unknown to the ancients, did not come into use in Europe before the end of the fourteenth century, or in the reign of Charles V. of France. Knives had been used previously to convey food to the mouth, the blade being made round at the extremity for that purpose.

After the meal, before quitting the festal apartment, the hands were washed a second time.

Gallantry very naturally suggested placing the guests at table in pairs, male and female. The tact of the master and mistress of the house consisted in knowing how best to arrange their guests, so that each couple should be entirely satisfied. That was an accomplishment upon which every experienced host very properly piqued himself, for the success of the feast in great measure depended upon it. The two persons who were paired for the nonce had only one plate in common for each helping, which was termed “eating out of the same dish.” In the same fashion, they both drank out of the same cup.

When a monarch or prince wished to honour some one specially at table, he caused his cup, after he had drunk from it, to be handed to him with the rest of the liquor it contained. This was looked upon as a signal mark of royal favour.

To serve up wine and water, before decanters and bottles came into use, vases of various sorts were had recourse to, which, according to their form or capacity, were called flagons, ewers, hydras, beakers, goblets, jacks, pints, and quarts. The *hanap* was a kind of cup mounted upon a foot, raised like a chalice. Another quaintly formed vase was that called a *nef*, from being modelled like a ship, and was destined to hold the salt-cellar, napkin, &c., of a king or prince; for this piece of table ornament was solely confined to sovereigns and royal personages. To make it a fixture during meals it was usually designed with syrens or lions for supporters, or else simply supported by feet. In the inventory of the plate of Charles V. were twenty-one silver *nefs*, the largest of which weighed seventy marks. This table utensil was more recently known, in another form, under the name of *cadenas*; and a specimen in gold, conceded to the use of Cardinal York, youngest son of James II., when that last of the Stuarts resided in exile at the Court of the Grand Monarque, is at present exhibited among the *Objects on Loan* at the South Kensington Museum.

The discovery of the New World exercised a powerful influence on the further development of the culinary science. Not only did it augment our productions, but it has furnished us with spices very superior to those of the ancient condiments. Our sauces, thanks to these spices, possess principles more active, and become more easy of digestion in the stomach. Hence, again, a more rapid action of food upon our faculties. At least Carême believed so, and explained it very ingeniously. The modern *cuisine*, therefore, is largely indebted for its refined savour to the chili of South America, the cinnamon of Ceylon, the vanilla of Mexico, the clove and nutmeg of the Moluccas, the pepper of Java, the caper of Barbary, the allspice of the West Indies, &c. The ancients flavoured their dishes with cinnamon, menthe, saffron, oxymel, old cheese, and the pistachio, which Vitellius imported from Syria.

The schism of Martin Luther—which initiated that great religious movement, the Reformation—had for its essential cause the fasts, abstinence, and similar punishments inflicted on the faithful in Germany. All-powerful as was the Catholic church, the spiritual power fared ill when it meddled with the *cuisine*. The result of that error was the beneficial change wrought in Europe, and known in history by the name of the Reformation.

The discoveries which continued to enrich gastronomic science no longer came to us from the Venetians, Genoese, and Florentines, but from the Portuguese and Spaniards. Bayonne, Mayence, and Frankfort also prepared their delicious hams; Strasbourg began to smoke her sausages and bacon, and supplied us with great store of them. Amsterdam sent us its small salted herrings; Hamburg its beef. These facts, which followed one another consecutively, indicate the earlier period of the first extreme diffusion of material subsistence.

The acme which Italian gastronomic elegance reached at this time

was exhibited, probably, on the occasion of the espousals, by proxy, of Henry the Fourth of France, and Marie de' Medici, when a banquet of almost fabulous splendour was given by the Grand Duke, the bride's uncle, in the Pitti Palace, at Florence. The table at which the Queen supped was placed across the hall, and raised four feet. *Vis-à-vis* was a buffet, elevated to the ceiling, in the form of a *fleur-de-lis*. Upon the shelves of this buffet were displayed costly vases of gold, silver, and ivory; cups beset with rare jewels, tazzas, shields, reliquaries of rare workmanship, trophies of antique jewellery,—in short, most of the inestimable treasures amassed by the Medici: jewelled sconces holding tapers; mirrors set in Florentine mosaic, and *jardinières* filled with fragrant flowers, adorned the walls of the saloon. Queen Marie sat, having at her right hand the Duchess of Mantua, her sister—the Grand Duchess Christine, and the Duchess de Bracciano. At her left was the legate, the Grand Duke, and the Duke of Mantua. The plateau was decorated with statuettes of the deceased Dukes of Florence, and with dwarf olive trees in silver urns, mingled with vases of fragrant plants. There were also trophies of precious metal, modelled by Cellini and Michael Angelo, and drinking cups of novel design. The Duke de Bracciano and Don Antonio de' Medici handed the dishes to the Queen. The service of meats over, the royal table, by some mechanical contrivance, disappeared through the floor of the saloon; whence, after an interval, a second table rose, laden with exquisite fruits, *bonbons*, and conserves. This eventually disappeared, and was replaced by a third, bearing delicious beverages, cut flowers, fans, small mirrors, and fragrant waters. A fourth table followed, raised with the same celerity. "This table was laid in imitation of the delicious gardens of Alcinous; flowers and fruits, mingled with tiny fountains throwing up jets of perfumed waters; while numberless little birds flew from mimic bowers, and filled the hall with melody." A masque terminated the festivities of the evening.

History, which has only become philosophical within the last century, and took little note of manners and civilization generally until Voltaire had demonstrated the importance of commemorating them, affords few materials for filling up the period which intervened between the arrival of Catherine de' Medici, and the accession of Louis XIV. But in that interval the bulk of the French people did not cease to struggle for the amelioration of their social condition, though by different means, as they best could, and so achieved, by degrees, their national sociability. This struggle was carried on till the time of Richelieu.

We have hitherto said very little about our English good cheer. The two meals a day, which contented the Norman aristocracy of England from the period of the Conquest down to that of Henry IV., had, in his reign, been increased to four. These were—breakfast, taken at seven o'clock in the morning; dinner, at ten; supper, at four in the afternoon; and liveries, which consisted of a collation taken in bed, between eight

and nine in the evening. The breakfast, although so early in the morning, was a meal of the most substantial description; but we must remember that those who partook of it had generally been actively employed for three hours previous. From the "Northumberland Family Book," we find that the breakfast for an earl and his countess, during four days of a week in Lent, was, "first, a loaf of bread in trenchers, two manchets (that is, small loaves of the finest flour, weighing six ounces apiece), a quart of beer, a quart of wine, two pieces of salt fish, six baconed herrings, four white herrings, or a dish of sproits," forming, certainly, a liberal commencement of a day of mortification in Lent. On flesh days, the fish at breakfast was commuted for half a chine of mutton, or a chine of beef, boiled. The liveries, although taken in bed, were of the same abundant and substantial character. The Earl Percy and his countess, at this meal, had two manchets, a loaf of household bread, a gallon of beer, and a quart of wine, the latter beverage being warmed and spiced.

At these repasts, as the luxury of a fork was still unknown in England, the morsels were conveyed to the mouth with the fingers; while wine, beer, and ale, in goblets of wood or pewter, were handed round by numerous attendants. When we ascend from these every-day exhibitions in the mode of living among the aristocracy, to the banquets of the palace, and especially those which were commemorative of important events, we shall find that they were of a similar description, with a greater degree of splendour and bustle. Coarse abundance, whimsical variety, and stately parade still endeavoured to compensate for real discomfort. Of the cookery of the period we can gather little from contemporary writers beyond its general detail. From the descriptions, however, given by Fabyan, of two coronation feasts, as well as from incidental notices in other writers, we may conclude that it was still sufficiently coarse, although complex and costly. Almonds, almond milk, sugar, honey, and spices were plentifully used; and gold-leaf, powder of gold, and bright colours were in great request for the adornment of dainty dishes.

While luxurious living—or at least what was considered as such—was thus highly appreciated amongst princes and nobles, the priesthood were by no means wanting in devotedness to good cheer. The monasteries were noted for excellent dinners, and the cook was a most important personage in the conventual establishment. The secular clergy, also, pressed even religion itself into the service of gormandizing, by the institution of what were called *glutton masses*, in honour of the Virgin.

But of all the festive exhibitions of this voracious period, the installation feast of George Neville, the brother of the "king-maker," when he was inducted into the Archbishopric of York, is especially deserving of commemoration. A hundred and four oxen, and six wild bulls, a thousand sheep, three hundred and four calves, as many swine, two thousand pigs, five hundred stags, bucks, and roes, and two hundred and four kids, formed the solid basis of the entertainment. Of fowls, large and small, rare and

common, wild and tame, there were twenty-two thousand five hundred and twelve. These were aided by mountains of fish, pasties, tarts, custards, and jellies; and three hundred quarters of wheat formed the vegetable portion of the banquet. The quantity of liquids corresponded to that of the solids, consisting of three hundred tuns of ale, a hundred tuns of wine, and a pipe of hippocras. Although many of the articles were sufficiently rich and luxurious, and must have been procured from far and near with immense labour and cost, yet even at this more than regal banquet there seems to have been not a little grossness and foul feeding, seeing that among the dishes were twelve porpoises and seals.

In the diet of the common people, we as yet discover little or no improvement. They still found the staple of subsistence in joints of meat, brown, coarse bread, in proportions considerably inadequate to the quantity of animal food, and ale or beer. Towards the conclusion of this period, the legal writer, Fortescue, in describing the flourishing abundance in which the commons of England lived, mentions, among other circumstances of plenty, that they never vouchsafed to drink water, except for penance. But this statement, we fear, must be taken as in the main little better than a rhetorical or patriotic exaggeration.

In the time of the Tudors, as important a change took place in the article of diet as in household accommodations, and we now hear little of those gross hecatombs in the shape of feasts which were formerly usual. Still, indeed, fastastic subtleties, and other quaint devices of cookery were exhibited at state banquets; but they were now accompanied by an elegance that marked the advance of the age. Wolsey, the great master of luxurious living in his day, gave a banquet to the French ambassadors at Hampton Court, which, according to the account of the chronicler, must have been a truly magnificent regale; for after labouring to describe everything that was rich and rare, until his language sinks under the weight of his subject, he thus concludes in absolute despair:—"To describe to you the order, the dishes, the subtleties, and strange devices of the same, I lack both a head of fine wit, and also cunning in my bowels to declare those wonderful devices."* The improvement, however, that had taken place by this time in English eating, although great compared with the former grossness, was still left far behind by the refinement of France and Italy. We find, therefore, from the account of the Venetian ambassador, who visited England in the reign of Queen Mary, that foreigners were astonished at the immense quantity of provisions consumed by the English Court; but he adds that it was only a fourth part of what had been used during the preceding reigns. During the reign of Elizabeth, however, moderation in the number of meals had become pretty general: the afternoon meal wholly disappeared; and as for the after-supper, when indulged in at all, it was generally a very slight refectation. Thus, even

* Stow.

the gluttonous Falstaff himself is furnished by Shakspeare with nothing more substantial after supper than sack and anchovies.

A dinner now afforded a striking display both of the wealth and of the improved manners of the period. The nobility had discarded entirely their huge joints of salted beef, and platters of wood and pewter, together with the swarms of jesters, tumblers, and harpers, that formerly had been indispensable to the banquet-room. A stately ceremonial and solemn silence were considered to be the indications of true politeness; and the table was daily set out with a large variety of dishes, consisting of beef, mutton, veal, lamb, pork, kid, coney, capon, pig, or so many of these as the season afforded, with store of red and fallow deer, and varieties of fish and fowl. All kinds of fruits, pastries, and confections followed, along with an equally extensive variety of wines and liqueurs. The guests washed before they dined, rose-water and perfumery being abundantly ministered on the occasion; and they were ushered in dignified order to the table, according to their several ranks. It would appear that the hat was generally worn during the banquet, and this enabled the wearer more gracefully to pledge a health, or acknowledge a compliment, by doffing it. The wine and other liqueurs were not placed upon the table with the dishes, but on a sideboard, and each person called, as occasion required, for a flagon of what wine he preferred, by which, as Harrison informs us, much idle tippling was avoided.

Even the tables of private gentlemen and merchants were now supplied, not only plentifully, but delicately. If the table, according to the puritanical Stubbs, was not crowded with dishes, it was not thought worthy of the name of a dinner. Every dish, too, had its appropriate sauce, and at the third course, juncates and rich confections of spices were served up, consisting of quinces, pomegranates, oranges sliced and eaten with sugar, apples and pears, marmalade, prunes, raisins, dates, nuts, hard cheese, comfits, jellies of all colours, sugarbread, gingerbread, and florentines. Cakes and puddings were in such abundance, that the Greeks were astonished at the vast quantities of currants exported from their country to England, and they supposed that the English used this delicate fruit either for the process of dyeing, or for fattening hogs.* And while high and abundant living thus distinguished the man of worship and substance, a share of the general plenty had descended to the inferior classes, and even the humble artificer could now obtain all the different kinds of butcher meat.

But amidst all the innovations of luxurious living that had now taken place, a fork at table, as we have already mentioned, was still unknown. Bread and meat were presented upon the sharp point of the knife, and the fingers of the left hand made regular visits to the platter, and conveyed to the mouth what the carving of the right hand had prepared.

* Fynes Moryson.

Queen Elizabeth, we are told, was exceedingly and habitually abstemious, seldom eating of more than two dishes, and partaking very moderately of those. Her example was not without weight amongst her courtiers, as certainly her Court was not degraded by the absolute gluttony which disfigured that of her successor, James. Refinement in eating had, indeed, been gaining ground for some time before the accession of Elizabeth, introduced primarily, it may be, by that master in the science of good cheer, Cardinal Wolsey. Still, from the spread of civilization, and the more defined and ostensible position assumed by the middle classes of society, now fast rising into importance, solecisms were committed in decorum and propriety, which it was most unlikely should arise when there were only the two great classes of nobles and serfs, between whom, on matters of courtesy or deference, collision was impossible. In these circumstances *etiquette* had its rise, and great folks fenced themselves round with a mass of observances.

The ceremonial observed by the Tudor sovereigns approached absurdity. When the sisters of the young King, Edward VI., dined with him, they were not permitted even a chair, but sat on a bench, sufficiently distant from the King for his canopy not to overhang them; and when Elizabeth dined with Queen Mary and Philip of Spain, though heiress presumptive to the kingdom, and treated as such, she was carefully placed outside the cloth of estate. But King James I. carried this *etiquette* quite as far; for we read that, on the 4th of June, 1610, he created his son, Prince Henry, Prince of Wales, having previously knighted him; without which honour he was incapable of sitting at dinner with his sovereign, though his own father.

Forks are supposed to have been introduced into common use among the upper classes in the reign of James I., by a traveller of the name of Coryat,* who had seen that mode of eating in Italy; though forty years after this, forks were still a novelty, as may be inferred from a passage in Heylin's "*Cosmography*" (1652):—"The use of silver *forks* with us, by some of our spruce gallants, taken up *of late*, came from hence into Italy, and from thence into England." For a long time after their introduction, they were considered as a most superb mark of coxcombry. But as the use of the fingers in eating required a scrupulous attention to cleanliness, it seems strange that such a decorous usage as the substitution of a fork for one's digits should be constantly ridiculed by the dramatic writers of the period. Ben Jonson, however, in his play, "*The Devil is an Ass*," has the following sarcastic hit at them:—

Meercraft. Have I deserved this from you two, for all
My pains at Court, to get you each a patent?

Gillthead. For what?

Meercraft. Upon my project of the forks.

* Coryat's "*Crudities*." 4to. London, 1611.

Sledge. Forks ! *What be they ?*

Macraux. The laudable use of forks,
Brought into custom here as they are in Italy,
To the sparing of napkins. That, that should have made
Your bellows go at the forge, as his at the furnace.
I have procured it, have the signet for it,
Dealt with the linendrapers on my private,
Because I fear'd they were the likeliest ever
To stir against to cross it ; for 'twill be
A mighty saver of linen through the kingdom,
As that is one o' my grounds, and to spare washing.
Now, on you two had I laid all the profits :
Gilthead to have the making of all those
Of gold and silver, for the better personages ;
And you, of those of steel for the common sort ;
And both by patent.

French cooking was now becoming fashionable in England. Harrison says the cooks are, for the most part, "musical-headed Frenchmen and strangers." Massinger, in his "City Madam," satirizes this novelty :—

Lady Frugal. What cooks have you provided ?

Holdfast. The best of the city : they've wrought at my Lord Mayor's.

Anne. Fie on them ! they smell of Fleet Lane and Pie Corner,

Mary. And think the happiness of man's life consists
In a mighty shoulder of mutton.

Lady Frugal. I'll have none
Shall touch what I shall eat, you grumbling cur,
But Frenchmen and Italians ; they wear satin,
And dish no meat but in silver.

The refined taste of Charles I. and his queen caused a rapidly progressing change in the details of the dinner-table ; but during the reign of his father, all the gastronomic extravagances which had marked the Court of Elizabeth were rather increased than diminished. James was fond of the pleasures of the table, and, moreover, so exceedingly exact and punctual in his meals, that one of his courtiers professed that, were he to awaken suddenly from a seven years' sleep, he would be able to guess exactly what the King had had for dinner.*

Howell, the well-known letter-writer, being requested by a friend to procure a French cook, thus humorously addresses her :—

"MADAM,—You spoke to me for a cook who had seen the world abroad ; and I think the bearer hereof will fit your ladyship's turn. He can marinate fish and jellies ; he is excellent for a *pickant* sauce, and the *haugou* ; besides, madam, he is passing good for an ollia. He will tell your ladyship that the reverend matron, the *olla podrida*, hath intellectuals and senses ; mutton, beef, and bacon are to her as the will, understanding, and memory are to the soul ; cabbage, turnips, artichokes, potatoes, and dates, are her five senses, and pepper the common-sense ;

she must have marrow to keep the life in her, and some birds to make her light ; by all means she must go adorned with chains of sausages. He is also good at larding of meat, after the mode of France."

That sparkling wit and amusing memoir-writer, De Grammont, looked with great contempt upon the state banquets of Charles the Second, so far as concerned the cookery. When dining at his Majesty's table on one occasion, old Rowley made his wonted remark, that he was served upon the knee, a mark of respect not common at other Courts.

"I thank your Majesty for the explanation," replied De Grammont; "I thought they were begging pardon for giving you so bad a dinner."

Though French cookery—or the attempt of it—was as fashionable then as now, it is probable that the science was then in a very imperfect state—neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, which might justify De Grammont's sarcasm.

Pepys speaks of a grand dinner at Guildhall, in 1663, when there were ten good dishes to a mess, and plenty of wine of all sorts ; but that none of the tables but those of the Lord Mayor and Privy Council had napkins or knives ; and that a great portion of the company had neither napkins nor *change of trenchers*, and drank out of *earthen pitchers and wooden dishes*. On this occasion a bill of fare was placed under every salt.

So late as the reign of Queen Anne, we find that when Swift dined with the chaplains at the Palace, they ate off pewter.

Under the *Grand Monarque* cookery made prodigious advances, being one while employed to give a zest to his glories, and then again to console him in their decline. Liqueurs were invented for Louis XIV. in his old age, when he could scarcely endure existence without a succession of artificial stimulants. His appetite in the prime of life was prodigious. The name of his celebrated *maître d'hôtel*, Bechamel—a name as surely destined to immortality by his sauce, as that of Herschel by his star, or that of Baffin by his bay,—affords guarantee and proof enough of the discriminating elegance with which the royal table was served. Here all the art and skill of the cook was set forth ; but soon small dinner-parties, of fewer guests and more *recherché* wants, exacted greater care and more minute attention. It was at the "*petit couvert*" in the *Salon des Favorites*, and at the delicate suppers of courtiers and financiers, that artists displayed their skill, and, animated by a praiseworthy ambition, endeavoured to surpass each other.

It may be observed, that about this same period the culinary art flourished at the Court of England. Queen Anne, the gouty queen of gourmands, who had Lister, one of the editors of the *Apicius*, for her pet physician, was fond of good cheer, and, in fact, achieved the highest honours of gastronomy, by giving her name to a pudding. She did not think it beneath her dignity to converse with her cook ; and English cookery books contain many dishes "after Queen Anne's fashion."

A RUNAWAY HORSE.

I ONCE knew a little boy who bewildered his parents and nearest of kin by exhibiting a mysterious liking for the neighbourhood of a railway tunnel. It was his place of daily resort, and for a very long time the motive which induced him to visit that particular locality could not be extorted from him in the way of confession. When at last his secret was wormed out of him, it was found that he had consulted some law of averages of his own and determined, that if he waited constantly at the tunnel's mouth he would ultimately be sure of witnessing a "railway catastrophe"! The youngster's morbid and reprehensible taste was never gratified, and I never heard that his boyish disappointment had soured the after years of his life. It has struck me, however, that if his fancy had turned upon accidents befalling horses, the chances in his favour would have been infinitely greater; not that I think he would have been any gainer, even if he had seen as many "carriage accidents" as the whole London force of "penny-a-liners" (so called because they are paid at the rate of three halfpence a line for their contributions to daily literature, I suppose) put together. I do not think I am particularly squeamish, and I know that I have more than once passed within a hair's-breadth of danger point without my nerves having been shaken into pulp; but my own experience of "serious accidents" induces me to say that they are not pleasant to see. I have seen a great number,—one quite recently,—and I make no concealment of the fact that the "sensation" which I have got out of them has not agreeably affected me, but very much the reverse.

My latest experience of a runaway horse accident was this:—A large, handsome, high-spirited horse had bolted, carrying away at its heels, as if it had been a feather, an elegant little brougham—quite a Brompton or St. John's Wood *bijou* affair—empty, fortunately; the driver—I don't know where. Crash! The dainty little vehicle, worth at least a hundred and fifty guineas, touched against a heavy railway van, and was a wreck. The high-spirited horse was off—more high-spirited than ever. A four-wheeled cab crossed his path; he struck the body of it with his nose and chest, and the obstruction was a heap of fragments in the midst of an instantaneously gathered crowd. (By the way, do runaway horses ever turn aside to avoid an obstacle, or do the barbarous blinkers prevent them from seeing before them?) After swerving, and slackening his pace for a moment, as if partially stunned, the high-spirited horse was off again, shouted at and avoided, and I saw no more of it until a quarter of an hour later, when it was led back to the spot where the ruins of the elegant little brougham were being tied together for removal, and I saw that it was out about the chest and knees, and had one or two of its teeth knocked out of their places.

I did not question the chemist's assistant standing at his master's

door as to how the horse had chanced to run away ; I did not even consult the old apple-woman at the corner of the street, though I heard her declare to a nursemaid with a perambulator full of sleeping babies that she had "see'd it all, from fust to last." I am not a newspaper reporter, and reflection is more to my taste than *visd voce* interrogations of over-well-informed apple-women at exposed street corners.

Several thoughts occurred to my mind after I had wriggled myself out of the tiptoeing crowd.

The horse is the noblest and most useful animal over which the intellect of man has given him control, according to the remarks of fine writers on natural history ; but what, I inquire, are the advantages of high-spirited horses over horses that are less high-spirited to those who have the (not always) good fortune to ride in broughams of their own ? Such horses cost a great deal to buy, on account of their superior strength, speed, and beauty of form. Of course a handsome horse is what every one would prefer to an ugly one ; but it seems to me that, after all, it is the uses to which the animal is to be put that should determine the question of selection. In the crowded thoroughfares of a great city—in London especially—high speed is carefully to be avoided, chargeable and fineable before police magistrates. A horse of very great speed is, therefore, an absurdity, as well as being dangerously out of place, when he is set to do slow work. A large, strong horse is wasted, moreover, when he is put to draw a, to him, feather-light vehicle, like the charming little brougham of which I have just seen the splintered remains picked out of the mud. It appears to me that I get a glimpse, in such cases, of both folly and wastefulness,—failings which I do not think any persuasion will induce me to respect.

Whenever, of an afternoon, I walk along the Park end of Piccadilly, I see, during the "season," a number of men—"swells"—plainly "snatching a fearful joy" from the excitement of driving their pairs of thorough-breds ; women, too, I see, bright with the exertion of controlling their three or four hundred guineas' worth of foaming, champing, high-spirited horse-flesh ; and, in both sets of cases, I see that there is an almost constant struggle between the drivers and the horses,—the drivers, ordinarily, just able to restrain the impulses of their strong and fleet steeds from freely exerting their natural strength and speed. If the pleasure of driving these horses is actually, as I must suppose it to be, in systematically contradicting and repressing the powers given them by nature, I really cannot help thinking the pleasure a brutal one,—not so vulgar, but—to my mind, at all events—less reasonable than cock or dog fighting,—excitements in which none but blackguards now think of indulging. Cocks are pugnacious from the moment they put on their first suit of feathers ; "dogs delight to bark and bite, for 'tis their nature to," as Dr. Watts has told us, and they will do so as long as they keep clear of the doctrine of metempsychosis ; and high-spirited horses, curbed and fretted

by restraint, assert nature's own just right when they put forth their strength—and run away.

"N'ayez pas de diamants; c'est trop triste de les perdre," was the wise advice of a woman of the world to a less experienced friend,—“Don't have any diamonds; it's too painful to lose them.” “People who have diamonds,” says keen-sighted Alphonse Karr, in his “*Poignée des Verités*,” “are never free from anxieties; accounts of robberies affect them ten times more than they do other people; on a journey they are filled with anxiety as to the safety of their diamonds, to the guardianship of which they have devoted themselves, like the dragon that watched over the golden apples in the garden of the Hesperides, and who, the fable tells us, was horribly weary of his task.” “Observe,” says the same writer, “that diamonds are an object agreeable only to the eyes, and that those who wear them do not even see them.” It seems to me that the spirit of these remarks applies exactly to the driving of high-spirited horses about the noisy and difficult streets of London; all the risk and anxiety inseparable from the display belong to the drivers, all that is agreeable in it goes to the on-lookers. I think the bargain a reckless one,—reckless as raising money at cent. per cent., or accepting bills in blank to oblige a friend's friend—feats of improvidence not wholly unaccomplishable in the small world of swelldom. To take a very commonplace view of the subject—a money view—using high-spirited horses to do the work of low-spirited ones is enormously extravagant. I will venture to estimate the chances at several—say ten—thousand to one, that had a light, good-tempered, well-trained horse been used in place of the timid, high-spirited animal whose doings have in some sort provoked these remarks, the “accident” would not have happened, and the owner would have been spared a loss of—what shall I say?—

On <i>bijou</i> brougham	£120
On market value of high-spirited horse (fifty per cent.) . . .	60
Compensation for smashed cab	20
<hr/>	
Total	£200

There was fortunately, as I said, nobody in the exquisite little carriage, but the fancy runs in my head that a pretty large additional item of compensation—for vexation, agitation, and inconvenience—would have to be transmitted to Brompton or St. John's Wood. Possibly this particular case may have been one of those in which “money was of no consequence;” at the risk of being thought narrow-minded, I must record thereon my opinion, that not even a Marquis of Westminster or a Rothschild is justified in considering the wasting of a considerable sum of money as a matter of “no consequence.” A latter-day idea is, that a man has not an absolute right to do what he likes with his own; his

obligations to his fellow-men are very numerous, some clearly defined in Acts of Parliament, but a great many more made binding in unwritten law, and, in one sense or another, everybody in civilized society is accountable to everybody else—not excepting even those who unreasonably persist in making high-mettled horses do the work of low-mettled ones; their right to “do what they like with their own” is dominated by my right to call them to account when they have had their way. The fast, though Honourable, Mrs. Mountfleuris’s splendid pair of matched greys being liable to run away with their fair driver any day in the “season,” and as, whenever they perform that natural, but danger-fraught, feat of strength, they may incontinently smash the humble hansom in which I may happen to be riding, I have clearly a lien upon the lady’s horse-compelling rights.

Lord Foozle’s thick and thin admirers may think me a very poor, timid sort of fellow, but the expression of their opinion will not deter me from owning that, whenever I see his lordship’s magnificent turn-out, with his lordship barely controlling his pair of barbs, I am not sorry—in fact, I am decidedly glad—to have the stout iron bar of the park side-rail firmly planted between me and his lordship’s carriage-wheels. As I look at his lordship—who is notoriously not strong in any sense, though he comes of an excellent old stock—I think how his poor left wrist, and elbow, and biceps, must ache after an hour’s wrestling with his two bits of blood. I do not know that ever his lordship came to grief in any of his afternoon drives; but I am sure that he never takes the reins in hand without risking his neck from the moment his groom moves from the heads of his high-spirited steeds.

After what I have said, it will not be supposed that I am in the least degree uneasy on account of his lordship’s neck, or of the succession which would be deranged by the accident of his lordship’s spinal column being irremediably fractured. Should it be my uncomfortable fortune to see his lordship’s high-spirited horses run away with him, I have not the least doubt that my sympathies will be enlisted on the side of whomsoever else may have the ill luck to be injured on the occasion in person or property,—not forgetting his lordship’s misused pair of magnificent barbs. Meantime I watch his lordship snatching his “fearful joy” to give him an appetite for dinner, and I moralize as I list, careless of the opinions of Lord Foozle’s admirers, backed by the sustaining laughter and contempt of his lordship’s well-to-do horse-dealer in chief, who sold him the very barbs to which I have dared to allude disapprovingly. Having gone so far, indeed, I intend to go a step further, and include high-spirited saddle-horses within the circle of my objections.

I know perfectly well that to ride a low-spirited horse is by no means to be secure against accidents; to ride a high-spirited one through the thronged streets of London, however, is, I am quite sure, to court the maximum of danger. The horse that killed Sir Robert Peel was as quiet

a beast as ever bore a rider, I know; and in using him Sir Robert reasonably thought he was minimising the danger inseparable from horse-riding. There is no absolute security against accidents to riders, but there is a vast difference between the escapes of good luck and of good management; I am irritated by the one as much as I am sympathetically moved by the other. I once saw the late lamented Prince Consort momentarily lose the management of a horse he was riding through the narrow part of Knightsbridge, by Wilton Place. The restive animal tried to rear up, and backed sharply on to the pole of a Kensington omnibus; the Prince kept a firm seat, however, and the prod of the omnibus pole had a quieting effect upon his horse, which turned up Wilton Place without further opposition. But it was a very narrow escape for the Prince, and I regretted the risk he was running in riding such an animal on so difficult a road.

To return to my horsey aversions of the Park and Piccadilly, I never see Sir Hippolitus Foolhardy mounted on one of his thoroughbreds, with his straight back, feeble legs, and exquisite boots, armed with spurs of danger, without wondering what the rate of insurance on his valuable life would be in any office where his bad seat and passion for riding fiery horses might happen to be known. It is with drivers of the race of Foolhardy, however, that I am most seriously at odds, on account of their superior powers of doing mischief. If Sir Hippolitus gets thrown, and finds by the effects of direct concussion that he has more brains in his head than he knows what to do with, that will be his affair—and his doctor's; but Lord Foozle's being over-mastered by his favourite pair of barbs, may involve life and limb to a score of more admirable members of society. I do not say that his lordship might not, possibly, be run away with by a pair of very inferior horses to those which it is his daily pleasure to fret during the season; but my mind is strongly bent in favour of a more reasonable adjustment of means to a given end than that adopted by Lord Foozle. Rook-shooting with an Armstrong ship-gun is something more than ridiculous, to my way of thinking; I would let Lord Foozle shoot rooks with a proper pea-rifle, if his lordly mind were set upon the excitement of that branch of sport; but if, in killing his rooks, he stuns me, he shall at least do it under protest.

I have reached my favourite lounge, by the rails in the Park, by the time I have delivered myself of all these reflections and remarks, and I repeat them, in a general and suggestive way, to my friend, the Honourable Mr. Coltsfoot, whose turn-out, equally with Lord Foozle's, I consider perilous to the foot passengers of Piccadilly at all the crossings. My honourable friend has pulled up to honour me with a few moments' chat, which is accompanied by the enviable advantage of a public recognition; and it is gratifying to me to observe that his smartly dressed and active young fellow of a groom has taken his place at the noses of his pair of satin-coated, fleet-limbed horses. Seeing this, I can talk more freely, giving my undivided attention to my honourable friend.

"Aw—you don't dwive^h high-spiwited horses yourself?" says my honourable friend, giving the off-side horse an artistic touch with his whip that makes the fiery animal rear up and snort.

"No," I answer.

"Nor low-spiwited ones neither?" says my honourable friend, laying a wicked emphasis on the adjective.

"Neither," I reply.

"Aw—thought so!" says my honourable friend, with a short laugh, and, I am sorry to add, winking over his horses' ears to his groom, who touches his hat, and, *looks*—

"You had him there, sir."

Whereupon my honourable friend touches up both steeds till they rear, and then drives on his enviable way. Shall I allow him to go off with the honours of victory and the last word?

Yes; with all my heart. For though it rises to the tip of my tongue to ask my ready-witted friend if he has seen in the *Times* of this morning the shocking account of a lady killed through being over-mastered by a "rather high-bred" horse which she was attempting to drive, I know that he will merely give me his opinion that it's confounded nonsense women driving at all; which would be uselessly wide of the *subject*.

I let my honourable friend have the last word, therefore, watch him safely out of sight, and then go on my way, my views as to the objectionableness of driving high-spirited horses made more than ever clear by the vision which rises in my mind of that ill-starred Northumbrian lady, "beloved by rich and poor," telling her children to get out of the carriage until she was able to get her plunging, high-bred horse more in hand, and being carried back, dead, into the house which she had left a few minutes before "in the vigour of health."

CHARLES S. CHELTNAM.

MADELEINE GRAHAM

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WHITEFRIARS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE ENGAGED FINGER.

SOME resolutions, however, require a great deal of fitting and refitting,—taking out of the holes we put them in originally,—shifting, awling, hammering, and clenching, before we can quite make up our minds that the work as it stands is a good work; that is to say, workmanly finished: for this kind of mental carpentering is not always squared according to the rule of right; oftener the other way. Almost all our really good and fitting ideas are simple and one-sided,—the evil ones complex and full of doubts and obliquities. The idea which now possessed Madeleine Graham's brain was of the latter order.

Perhaps, after all, she would never have done what most people afterwards supposed (without sufficient proof, it appeared) she did do, but for a most disastrously overwhelming complication of urgencies. Was it not Göethe who said that he felt within himself the capability of every human wickedness? Are we to suppose that the great German mountain-in-a-mist meant thereby to declare that on a sufficient temptation or pressure he should have been as black a criminal as who you please? Or that he merely wished Society to consider what it was about in the creation of circumstances that influence the destinies for good or evil of average humanity? Was this girl, in short, so much guilty of her acts, as SOCIETY of this girl? For my part, I do not know: I take everything for granted, and relate what I find on record, without attempting to account for it otherwise than as appears on the direct face of things.

Well, then, fate would have it that Mr. Behringbright—after a very uncomfortable night at Glengariff Castle, and a singular explanation on the following morning within its walls—advised himself to pass over to the society of his lady-love. Like most persons who are diffident of their personal attractions, and desire to find favour in the sight of some fair object of the affections, he considered that he should look better neatly shaved and in a clean shirt. All his gear of this sort was at the "Red Herring" tavern; and thither he directed himself to be conveyed in the jaunting car he had hired the previous day at Prospect Palace. I say nothing of his two surgeons whom he had taken from Killarney on a bootless errand, Lord Glengariff persisting in refusing all medical aid or assistance whatever, excepting that of Dr. Bucktrout, who, almost for the first time in his life—but most gratefully, poor man—found himself treated as an oracle of Æsculapian wisdom: unless the reader should be interested so far in their fate as to be glad to know that they received fifteen

guineas sterling apiece from Mr. Behringbright for being jumped up suddenly on a jaunting car off to a castle two miles distant, where they saw no patient, and, consequently, did neither harm nor good, and were duly forwarded by the same conveyance back to their homes the following day.

At the "Red Herring" tavern, Mr. Behringbright—greatly against his will, and altogether out of his calculation, for he had forgotten about him in the hurry of events—was forced to grant an interview to Monsieur Camille Le Tellier; who, supposing, like most other people, that there was no business of importance in the world but his own, took the very first opportunity that presented itself to go through the ceremonial laid down for him by Madeleine Graham;—that is to say, sent in his card; obtained a brief interview, which he did not want particularly to lengthen from any gratification it afforded himself; and, in a manner so incoherent, that even the exciting nature of the subject, and his Gallicisms of language, scarcely accounted for it, declared himself to be a fervid admirer of his (Mr. Behringbright's) beautiful ward, Emily Maughan, and requested his favour and permission to make "the adoration of his sentiments" known to that young lady.

This was part of the intelligence Mr. Behringbright came to communicate, in all the confidence of love and unbounded trust, to Madeleine Graham, the morning after the fatal staghunt.

Poor man! he did not attach that degree of stress to the information he might, if he had known what part it would bear in his own destiny. If we knew it, with what respect should we survey the bit of a railway flange which, flying off, would consign us—even to heaven! But these are uncomfortable remarks, which there is no occasion to insert in a work of light modern fiction like ours.

Madeleine—who was looking lovelier than ever that morning, owing to a peculiarly lustrous glow on her cheeks and in her eyes—seemed much gratified by the statement. She expressed herself with great warmth to that effect. How happy darling Emily could now be made! How her wonderfully disinterested—though very strange, certainly, and unaccountable—infatuation for this young Frenchman could now be recompensed! Her (Madeleine's) dearest Mr. Behringbright—since Mr. Behringbright he was—was so rich, he could easily afford to make the beloved friend of her youth happy with the husband of her choice. Would her dearest Mr. Behringbright promise it? Would he set Monsieur Le Tellier up in business, or appoint him to some lucrative situation in his own service? Or, best of all (and really it would have been much the best), would he, could he, get him some good consulship abroad? He must have interest with Government. Could he get him appointed consul at Lima, or at St. Petersburg, or at Hong Kong, or any distant place like that? She was quite strangely energetic in her demand for a *distant* place of display for the commercial talents, and acquirements, and gentlemanly manners, and knowledge of various foreign languages, including his own, which Emily

had always assured her Camille—that is, Mr. Le Tellier—possessed. Emily would not mind where she went—no woman of any feeling, who truly loved any man, would mind where she went—with a beloved husband. She thought—she knew—she was certain—Emily would rather prefer—would greatly prefer—a *very* distant place of settlement—for a time, at least.

Could this distant place of settlement have been found for Monsieur Le Tellier—and could he have been coaxed into departing to occupy it—perhaps all might yet have gone well. The *Morning Boast* might yet have exulted in the details of the gorgeous parties, the balls, and other grand receptions of the Baroness Behringbright, at her magnificent mansion in Hyde Park. Camille Le Tellier himself might have lived on, smoking his cigar over a manifest, and otherwise appetising himself for dinner, at the expense of the British nation, in some latitude more favourable to indolent enjoyment of existence, than the exertion of the greater faculties of the human mind, which he did not possess. But, unhappily, unlike most persons who have influence with Government, Mr. Behringbright had a conscience and considerable sense of patriotism; and therefore—although he smiled, and looked and felt much pleased at Miss Graham's eagerness to secure a *distant* place of residence for the handsome husband-elect of her friend—he answered her quietly, but with evident fixity of resolve, that he should never think of forcing an incompetent foreigner upon the public charge of Great Britain, though, doubtless, he had considerable interest with the minister who gave away such appointments. And he was convinced—in spite of the good opinion so sensible a girl as Miss Emily Maughan appeared to have formed of him (but there was no accounting for delusions of that sort)—he was a perfectly incompetent, coxcombical young jackanapes, as regarded any position of public responsibility and charge. Even with respect to his own private mercantile business, which only involved the interests of an individual, he should be very far (from the opinion he had thus far formed of him) from choosing to entrust such a person with the management of any important branch, or remote distribution, which might remove him from constant control and supervision. He might be competent to sell silk and lace to mercers and milliners. He seemed to be so, since he was employed by some respectable French houses; but for his own part, he (Mr. Behringbright) would greatly prefer to all these alternatives, settling a handsome sum of money upon Emily Maughan, as a security against the probable results of folly and extravagance on the part of her husband-to-be, and contributing something reasonable besides to enable him to set up business on his own account, as a dealer in Lyons manufactures, or to purchase a partnership in one of the two or three firms he represented.

Madeleine thought to herself all this would hardly tally with the lofty ideas of his own self-consequence and right to position in the world of Monsieur Le Tellier. And once more the great THOUGHT started into vivid relief and inevitable consequence in her vision! The contempt

expressed on so short an acquaintance by a man whose calm sagacity and dispassionate estimate of men and things she had learned to respect, also fearfully strengthened her own. And one must have a great contempt for humanity before one undertakes to consign to the grave and worm, of one's own act and deed, even a single wearer of the outward form. Most of your mighty conquerors and climbers to empire have illustrated this principle on a colossal scale; but the hedgeside murderer and burglar "with violence" do so also in their degree, and the contempt which the ticket-of-leave man entertains for humanity *in his own person* is one of his most formidable qualifications for the garrotte and gallows.

However, there was nothing more to be said at this time on the subject. And indeed Mr. Behringbright, after delivering his dictum, passed to another, which completely swallowed up every minor peril and dread in the consideration of Madeleine.

She inquired after Lord Glengariff's state, with just the degree of kind and sympathetic, but not too warm, interest which she imagined would, under all the circumstances, be agreeable to Mr. Behringbright. And the reply she received would surely have shaken any less firmly seated soul to its foundations.

According to the patient's own declared opinion—and the endorsement of Dr. Bucktrout—Lord Glengariff was in a most dangerous state, and there was scarcely a possibility he should recover from the terrible fever and irritation produced by the goring of the stag. There was an ancient proverb indeed on that subject, Mr. Behringbright observed, which asserted that cases of recovery from such injuries were scarcely to be hoped for:—

"Of tusk of boar have thou no fear,
But beware thy life from horn of deer."

But his lordship's demeanour was besides of the most extraordinary character, and gave rise to the notion that the shock and constitutional disturbance he had undergone was suddenly developing the family taint in his blood! He seemed to wish to die; obstinately—almost with fury—refused all medical assistance but that of Dr. Bucktrout, whose skill, even to his niece Mr. Behringbright could not avoid remarking, he could not consider equal to the emergency. And the shaken and disordered state of his mind was further to be judged by certain facts Mr. Behringbright proceeded to detail,—how little to Madeleine's satisfaction may be considered.

Lord Glengariff had in the first place altogether refused to see Mr. Behringbright; alleging that he was in some inexplicable manner the author of the terrible calamity he had sustained. When at length he was soothed by his mother and Dr. Bucktrout into seeing him, their interview had been of the most singular and excited description. Lord Glengariff was, of course, in bed, but evidently in a state of high fever and general physical commotion, which it occasionally required the strength of his mother's gigantic nurse, of Dr. Bucktrout, who was a strong little man,

and even of Molloy the steward, to restrain. The moment he saw Mr. Behringbright he burst into the most passionate reproaches against him, for having driven him upon such a mad display of Quixotic courage and personal daring as a counterbalance to the enormous wealth he was known to possess; by the attractions of which he had induced Miss Madeleine Graham to inflict so public a slight upon him as she had, in the preference of herself from his barge to the millionaire's boat. And that Madeleine herself—like a cruel, heartless coquette as she was—had provoked and challenged him to the absurd display; much as the lady who flung the glove to the lion, indifferent to the results in every respect saving to enhance her own consequence, and stir the pretendants to her favour to still more exasperated recklessness of rivalry.

Mr. Behringbright had replied, he stated, to all this frenzied declamation as calmly as he possibly could. He assured Lord Glengariff that up to the moment of her assenting to his request to join him—and for several minutes after—Miss Graham was entirely ignorant that he was anything but what he had represented himself,—a commercial agent of his own house. That nothing had ever given him greater pain and annoyance than his young friend's public—but no doubt without real drift or meaning—pursuit of Miss Graham; who, on her own part, was most thoroughly convinced that he meant nothing by it, except to amuse himself, or divert his mind from an uncomfortable recollection of another. She wished to express her sense of this by publicly declining the public but unreal homage offered to her; but no imaginable slight of which he could have legitimate reason to complain. So decisive a mark of preference banished all notion of coquetry on her part in the action with which he found so much fault; and he, Mr. Behringbright, was most happy to be enabled to state that he was assured he *was* the object of the young lady's most decided preference.

"But you may judge, dear Madeleine," the lover continued, with almost a blush of womanish modesty overspreading his honest visage, "how near to a state of lunacy poor Glengariff must be, and what patience I had to display, when upon that he burst into the most frantic expressions you ever heard,—that I must be an enchanter, a magician, and bewitched the women with some kind of philtre and love-charm, to dote upon me in the way they did! And he absolutely had the ridiculous insanity to yell to me that he was aware I was a libertine of the worst order, under a cloak of virtue and sobriety, and that I meditated adding *your* disgrace and ruin to my other triumphs!"

Mr. Behringbright paused, quite breathless with indignant emotion as he uttered the words; yet he, too, could not avoid joining in the peal of laughter into which Madeleine burst as she listened to them; laughter as musical and sweet as a peal of Lancashire bells; only he thought it was a little too prolonged and incessant.

"Never mind, dearest; it is funny; but after all, the jocularities are not

quite of the mirth-provocative order," Mr. Behringbright said, gently interrupting the outburst. "But of course, in Glengariff's excited condition, I could not be irritated; and I thought the best way to calm him would be to dispel the idea in the plainest and most direct manner; and so I told him that, on ascertaining that you could and did prefer me to all other men, I had made you an offer of marriage,—which you had accepted."

"That was right, perfectly right, dear Mr. Behringbright. I did not wish our engagement to be too universally declared until—until—papa and mamma had given their sanction," Madeleine answered, rather confusedly, upon this, finding she was expected to say something. "But you would then see immediately, from the coolness with which he would receive the intelligence, that he never was at all in earnest in the attentions he paid to me."

"I don't think he ever was, dear Madeleine," returned her lover, with a gratified expression so far as regarded that; "but the idea he went off upon immediately on hearing the avowal was more extraordinarily frenzied and out of the way than all his former ravings. He turned to his mother, who was beside him, sitting at his pillow head, and exclaimed, 'Then, dear mother! I am sure the *dream* that has haunted me so often and so long is founded in realities; and nothing but Emily's own declaration, face to face with Mr. Behringbright, and in my presence, shall remove the certainty I all but possess, from my heart!'"

"The *dream*!" replied Madeleine, really now astonished, and turning a little pale; "what dream?"

"It appears that he has dreamed (all the Glengariffs are a strangely visionary and superstitious people)—I don't know how often or in what form, but I believe in many—that Emily Maughan is the victim of some most treacherous and improper procedure; that she is, somehow or other, entangled in the mazes of some very vicious person or persons, who has either plotted or secured her destruction. I am sure I don't know which, for he refuses to enter into any clear elucidations of the subject. But would you believe it, my love! my Madeleine!" continued Mr. Behringbright, with much emotion, "from his amazing demeanour towards myself personally, from hints he formerly dropped, from some obscure intimations from Dr. Bucktrout, but, above all, from the remarkable resolution his mother has expressed, I am led to believe that he fancies in me the detestable secret seducer of the young girl whose protector and zealous friend I have been—but nothing more!—and that I am now sacrificing her to a fresher object of my licentious and despicably changeful and villanous passions!"

Madeleine Graham herself did stare in utter amazement at this revelation; and even a sense of the ludicrous seemed irresistibly to mingle with all the tragedy and discomfort of the position. Mr. Behringbright thought he distinguished a faint giggle in her accents, as after a pause she remarked,—

"But you could easily dissipate so preposterous an idea—which even delirium could scarcely account for Lord Glengariff's forming—by stating the real object of Emily's partiality,—this Frenchman—this Camille Le Tellier."

"I did so, as soon as I could really make up my mind to the conviction that I was glanced at," replied Mr. Behringbright; "but I could perceive nothing but incredulity and distrust in the young man's expressions and manner. Emily's reply to his offer of marriage, he said, he had studied over a thousand times, and found to conceal the hint of a terrific enigma, which could only be solved in the way he proposed, he concluded in the most determined style; that is to say, by Emily declaring to him in my presence the actual and true state of things, and the reason of her rejection of so advantageous an offer!"

"In your presence!—Emily!" faintly ejaculated Madeleine.

"Yes; but you have not heard the strangest and wildest of it all yet! Thereupon Glengariff turned to his mother, and adjured her, as she wished him to retain a desire to live—or to submit to the means by which his life might be preserved—or as she would administer to his dying hour the only consolation of which it was capable—to fulfil this greatest wish of his soul; and to procure that Emily Maughan should be summoned to this solemn ordeal and judgment with the least possible delay!"

"Good heavens! What an incredulous madman! Surely his mother's only answer would be to assure him that he was as mad as herself, and beg those present to put him in a strait jacket!" Madeleine exclaimed, in horror.

"Not at all, Madeleine. As you say, I do believe mother and son are as mad one as the other; for the Countess immediately declared to her son that, if it was in human power to obtain for him the wish he expressed, it should be done, happen what might in the result!"

"They ought both to be restrained."

"There is no power to do it; and perhaps the indulgence of their frenzy is the best—the only means of obviating its disastrous results," said Mr. Behringbright.

"But Emily will not come,—I am sure she will not come!"

"I do not know that, Madeleine. It is to a death-bed, perchance, she is summoned,—the death-bed of a man young, brave, kind, and honest, who has loved her—who she knows has loved her—with all the power and purity of an uncorrupt and manly heart. She can hardly refuse so slight a return for so much generosity and fidelity, asked with the zeal and persuasion I have reason to believe it will be!"

"No; she scarcely can—she scarcely can!" exclaimed Madeleine, clasping her hands with a despair and wildness of gesture that startled and astonished Mr. Behringbright. "Perhaps, indeed, she ought not!—No one has more influence with her than I have. My absence from this part of the country has become desirable. I ought to let my father and

mother know of the great engagement I have formed. I will return at once to Belfast. I will beg, I will implore, I will force Emily to comply with the poor, noble, unhappy young fellow's dying request!"

"There is no need, Madeleine. To crown the whole amazement of the affair, Lord Glengariff has obstinately refused to trust the delivery of his appeal and supplication to the fidelity of any but one messenger and agent; and that messenger and agent is his mother!"

"His mother!"

"His mother, Lady Glengariff; the Countess herself. Why do you look with such astonishment at me, my dear girl?"

"His mother! What, his mother!—leave her dying son on such an errand—his mother! It is impossible! Were his mother a thousand times a madwoman, she could not consent to such a proceeding!" almost screeched Madeleine.

"But it is the case that she has consented to start immediately on this mission to Belfast," said Mr. Behringbright, who knew not, by any means, that in the words he was pronouncing a sentence of death. "I left her busied in preparation for departure when I came away from Glengariff this morning, attended by her faithful serving-woman and the steward, Mr. Molloy. And as I have also written a letter to be delivered to Emily, I may say ordering her to comply with the injunctions contained, by all the authority I can have over her as a friend and guardian, I do not doubt the Countess will return at the utmost speed of railway and express, in time to gratify her son in this most fantastical, but at the same time apparently life-and-soul-concerning caprice."

"You, Mr. Behringbright? You?"

"Yes, I, dearest Madeleine. How else could I better show my innocence of so calumnious a misapprehension—my willingness to abide every investigation into my conduct and motives with regard to Emily Maughan?"

"Do you mean to say, Mr. Behringbright," said Madeleine, with a singular fierceness, a glare of scorn and contemptuous rebuke in her whole manner, which most unpleasantly affected Mr. Behringbright, "that you will be bated at the stake in this manner, at the pleasure of a madman and a madwoman, who dishonour and insult you by so atrocious a suspicion?"

"If they are mad, their doings are not to be regarded as worthy of attention in such strong lights, Miss Graham," returned Mr. Behringbright, not a little offendedly. "And even if their suspicions are irrational, they will be best confuted by a calm and unmistakable elucidation of the truth. Such I take to be the solemn clearance from every imputation of the sort which Emily Maughan will not fail to afford me."

"But you do not know—O Mr. Behringbright—you do not know the full horror of the position!" now exclaimed Madeleine, in sheer desperation, driven to place the climax on all her evil doings against Emily

Maughan. "You do not know what I know—what has induced me to be so urgent and immediate with you to marry, and remove to a distant scene, Emily and the man who—the man who, as she had confessed to me herself in heart-broken anguish—is the seducer of her unguarded youth; the father of an unborn heir of shame and betrayal!"

Mr. Behringbright appeared even more aghast than the unhappy girl herself who spoke, and who looked the very picture of horror and dismay, when he heard the words.

"Ah, indeed—this explains all!" he then exclaimed, quite dizzily, as if he had received an actual blow. "Poor Emily! But how otherwise could she have refused a glorious young hero of a man—an earl—like Glengariff, for this sorry Frenchman?"

"Who is here, resident in Killarney!—How will he suffer you to bring a woman in such a situation, all but his wife, to the bedside of a dying man who declares himself to be her lover; to acquit a third of a suspicion which never could have any existence but in the brain of madness, yet dishonours equally almost all parties concerned?" said Madeleine.

"You are right, my darling love! How wise, how prudent, how all you ought to be, you are! I will hurry back at once to Glengariff, to prevent such a crowning exposure! Even if it kills Glengariff, it is better that he should know the worst finally—at once—without further haggling of pretence to spare his feelings. But this detestable wretch of a Frenchman! Never, no, never shall the betrayer of a woman's confidence—so prodigious a betrayer—reap the reward of his crimes from me! Women have not been good to me hitherto—they have injured me; but you, dearest Madeleine, have restored me to all my belief and confidence in the sex! I consider myself the champion now as well as the guardian of that poor, weak, wronged girl; and though I will compel the villain to make her all the reparation marriage can, it is on her, and her alone, that I will confer and fix the benefits I had always intended when the occasion should arise. But oh, how little did I think it would come in such a form!"

And Mr. Behringbright—albeit unused to such effusions of sensibility—fairly burst into a paroxysm of tears and sobs.

But Madeleine exhibited an unusual sternness, not to say harshness and peremptoriness, in her manner.

"This is unworthy of you, Mr. Behringbright," she said, with a species of contemptuous asperity. "You are womanish in your grief! You will almost give countenance to Lord Glengariff's mad suspicions, if you go on so. For heaven's sake, lose not a moment in hastening to prevent this frantic journey—certain to end in the most dreadful exposures—on the part of Lady Glengariff!"

"I will not lose a moment, dearest—not a moment!" said Mr. Behringbright, himself strangely overawed and coerced by the concentrated power of will and emotion in the young woman's whole demeanour and tone. "Forgive me these tears; they are unmanly, I know; but it

grieves me so to the heart. I did so much respect Emily, for what I imagined her purity and goodness! It is enough to finish up what remained to me of faith in woman, only that you are a woman as well as an angel; and I can always find an anchorage for faith in your beloved heart. Hold, dearest, before I go—I had almost forgotten, but I have brought you the ring with which the representative of our family has, in all times since we have possessed jewels and ornaments of price, plighted his faith to his betrothed bride! It is the great Behringbright Diamond, the choicest of all my grandfather's stores, who traded in these bright stones when he wedded his wife! Here it is; and thus I plight you, Madeleine Graham, mine!"

So saying, the wealthy heir of a wealthy race produced a ring from his waistcoat pocket, the dazzling glitter of the gems with which it was set fairly lighting up his hand as he did so, and placed it on what is called in lovers' parlance "the engaged finger" of Madeleine Graham's white and beautifully-shaped small hand.

In good truth, the betrothed bride's eye flashed with more than equal brilliancy as she received the precious gift; and thoroughly did she mean it as she exclaimed, firmly clenching that little hand,—

"And I will perish sooner than relinquish this pledge of my dearest future husband's love!"

A passionate embrace responded (this scene took place in the Bucktrouts' private apartment, whence the aunt had withdrawn on some necessary business as soon as Mr. Behringbright presented himself), a renewal of promises, pledges, what not, of eternal love and fidelity; and then at last the much consoled lover was prevailed upon to hurry back to Glen-gariff on his errand.

He was hardly out of the room before Madeleine had rushed to the bell.

"When's the next post north, Rooney?" she exclaimed, breathlessly, as the waiter entered.

"It's after wanting five minutes, and perhaps half as many again, till the bags are sealed out," he replied. "So if your young leddyship is in a hurry, you had better wait till the next. And I take the *importunity* to tell your leddyship [Madeleine had been raised to the peerage by general consent of the hotel servants since it was known she was to marry a man worth a million of money] that I have made the inquiry she wished for, and find there is a foreign lady, with a fine bonnet and shawl, that calls herself Madame Loriôt, staying for a night and a day at the Muckcross."

"Very well, Rooney. But I cannot lose this post. Ink and paper instantly! and be ready to rush out the moment I am ready. You shall be well paid for your trouble."

"It's niver doubting your honour's ladyship I'll be!" grinned the worthy fellow, "with that ring on your finger, that beats the sun and all the little stars themselves for shining."

"And then I shall want a car for Muckcross."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

LADY GLENGARIFF EN ROUTE.

THE letter Madeleine found it so necessary to lose no time in despatching was to her mother, Lady Graham, in Belfast.

It was very business-like and brief, as suited the exigency. It contained the pleasing announcement that she had succeeded in the great enterprise on which she had left for Killarney. The millionaire had proposed; she had accepted him, *of course*, and he was to set out immediately to make his wishes known to her papa. He might be expected at once in Belfast, for he was *terribly in love*, and as anxious as any one could possibly be to complete the affair, and make her his dear, happy wife, and *all that*. But meanwhile, Madeleine went on to say, underlining almost every other word, she had discovered that that *artful creature*, Emily Maughan, who pretended to be so *artless*, had been all along *making love to poor Mr. Behringbright*! He had had the greatest difficulty to *parry her* designs even before she came over to Ireland. In fact, he had sent her there on purpose to get rid of her *love-making*, when the creature—as every one knew—had directly set her cap at *poor young Lord Glengariff*, and cajoled him into making such a senseless, ridiculous exhibition of himself; trailing over the country after her, and behaving in every other respect like a madman. And now, as Emily would be sure to fly into a fury at the final escape of such a splendid chance as Mr. Behringbright—and was plainly a *girl of no principles*—nothing was likelier than, if she saw Mr. Behringbright, she would endeavour to *spoil everything* by revealing all about that foolish affair which mamma would of course remember—that made papa so angry—with the French clerk, or something of that sort, who annoyed them all the last winter with his attentions to her, silly girl, that knew no better, if mamma had not so fortunately stopped things in time, by telling of their meeting one another at the Rock. *That would destroy all that had been done*. Mr. Behringbright was such a curious, particular kind of a man in the temper, she dared not even let him know how fond she was of *him*. Therefore her mother must find some pretence *instantly* to give *Miss Maughan* her dismissal from Belhaven Square, and, if possible, from Belfast itself.

If she could by any means see such a meddling, reckless person *shipped off* direct for England—Madeleine went on with her rapid pen to assure her mother—it would be of *immense advantage*—make everything so delightfully *safe*! And the thing most likely to prevail upon Emily to go *at once* would be to tell her of the intended match being appointed to take place directly they returned to Belfast—that they were on the way, and that Mr. Behringbright expressly *hoped and desired* Emily would leave the town, and Ireland also, before his arrival. Emily herself was very well aware of *reasons that would render it very painful for Mr. Behringbright to see her*. And mamma might say so, and urge it upon her in a way that she could

understand. Because really *the woman* made it no secret to Mr. Behringbright himself that she was *after him*. Hoping, perhaps, to coax him that way into having her—like a poor mouse that is too frightened to run when it knows the cat is springing! Papa might furnish her with any money she required to go, and could say Mr. Behringbright had desired him to *let her have it*. That would be sure to satisfy Miss Maughan, if anything could, that her room was more desired *than her company*.

All this was clear enough. But, besides, Madeleine was aware her mother would comprehend the necessity of the move—not quite so well, certainly, as herself, but very well indeed. There had been an infinite deal of pother and mischief already in the family about this Frenchman and his pretensions; which latter had been most ignominiously vetoed by the paternal authority long previously.

This letter despatched in time for the departing post, with Rooney's co-operation, Madeleine was free to hope that it might be of some use in clearing the embarrassed front of her position.

It was decidedly of the most vital importance to get Emily Maughan's fixed but ever-threatening corps removed from the sloping of the hills! After the last crowning calumnies the peril of confutation was sadly increased for our able young friend. Whatever plans were hit upon with regard to Le Tellier (and Madeleine herself hoped nothing was as yet positively decided upon there!), all was useless unless Emily was *also* safely removed out of the way.

In the beginning, Madeleine had felt some reluctance in her own mind to the harm she did this orphan and homeless girl, who had been her school friend, and whom she could not help respecting for her pure, candid, and gentle-hearted nature. She had found it necessary, it is true, for her own purposes, to do her a little mischief at first; not very much. What could it matter to Emily Maughan if Mr. Behringbright was misled into the belief that she had a handsome young Frenchman for a sweetheart? He meant nothing by her, himself! Madeleine did not intend to follow on with any further damage. But she had been *compelled*—still, each new injury had been a nuisance and a trouble to inflict. This was over now. Everything, Madeleine felt, was of inferior consequence to her own preservation. It was the first law of nature, and must be obeyed as necessarily as those other laws called Hunger and Thirst. She scrupled, she hesitated at nothing now. Nay, I believe she began to hate Emily, for the trouble she was obliged to take in achieving the poor girl's ruin! Her acts were no longer the dispassionate exequaturs of a great statesman or general, obliged to sacrifice a province or a regiment to obtain some object of policy or attack. Yes; Madeleine Graham now *hated* her victim: hated her for her goodness, for her knowledge of her secrets, for her being so truly loved by Lord Glengariff—for all the lies, in fine, that she, Madeleine, had been obliged to invent against her, and for the terrible difficulties in which they had involved the inventor. I am not sure,

indeed, but what she grew to be indignant at Emily for not being in reality the lost wretch she represented her. There seemed a kind of defiance and mockery in her persisting *not* to be the weak and fallen creature she was said to be; but a brave, pure, calm, and high-minded young woman. Something audacious and detestably ill-natured in Emily *not* having incurred the guilt and disgrace attempted to be fastened upon her, and which were so dangerous to another party's views of aggrandizement and wealth!—in her *not* being Madeleine Graham, in short!

Madeleine was, in fact, half mad with selfishness and fear. Not wholly so, or there might have been some excuse for her. She was not mad enough, for example, to dream any longer of a likelihood in the saving plan she had once lulled her fears with the chance of being able to realize for all parties. Marry Camille Le Tellier!—Emily Maughan marry Camille Le Tellier! The vague hopes she might possibly once have cherished in this respect had vanished on the least rational consideration. Camille himself, with all his vanity, ridiculed the notion. Immeasurably absurd! Madeleine began to perceive that she had, in some strange way, bedazed herself with her own falsehoods, and had half believed in the necessities of the imaginary position in which her calumnies had placed Emily Maughan.

Had there been a shadow of a hope towards this extrication, that other alternative would never have been looming so fast into such tremendous, horizon-closing proportions!—so that not the faintest glimmering of light seemed likely shortly to remain, until the great clearance could be made!—Not with the axe, indeed!—*nous avons changé tout cela*. Clytemnestra would never have thought of making so butcher-like a job of it, if she had lived in our days, with her opportunities in preparing her lord's meals, according to the custom of queens and other ladies of quality in the times of Troy's overthrow by "Argive Helen's rosy-fingered hand!"

It would make very little difference, Madeleine considered, if even Lord Glengariff and his mother were induced by that last dreadful scandal, to abandon their purposed explanation face to face with Emily Maughan. Camille, with his inordinate vanity and pretensions, would never submit to the only terms Mr. Behringbright had announced his inflexible resolution to grant to the supposed betrayer of the honour of his ward. If this audacious imputation had saved her one way, it had, therefore, destroyed her another. And so it began to be clearer and clearer to Madeleine, that she was quite right in giving in her adhesion to some such imperative power as destiny. Surely there was a destiny at work in her case! What *could* she do but what she was doing, and must go on doing? Madeleine did not reflect that she had first lost the control of her will by its exercise, and that it is the very Nemesis of crime that—

"Each step
Doth force his sequent, and, still hurrying on,
Breaks the wavering's knees!"

But it was speedily evident to her that no part of the logical consequences of her original departure from truth and fair-dealing was to be spared her. She was about to go down to the car she had ordered to take her on that important errand to see her dear, but somewhat of late neglected friend, staying at "the Muckcross," when Mr. Behringbright returned to interrupt the excursion, with the formidable addition in his company of the Countess of Glengariff.

He explained to Madeleine that he had met with this lady on his way to the castle, coming from it in a post-chaise, with luggage and attendants, on her route to the railway-station in Killarney, whence she was to proceed at once on her errand to Emily Maughan in Belfast.

Mr. Behringbright also explained that he had left his own vehicle for the Countess's, and had endeavoured to prevail upon her to abandon the frantic expedition, in the first place, by remonstrances on its folly and inexpediency. But the Countess's dry and haughty manner, and expression of her determination to proceed, obliged him to declare all he knew—all the full guilt and entanglement of Emily Maughan's position with her French lover.

And the Countess was certainly, for several moments, thunderstruck with the revelation. She even went so far as to order her postillion to turn his horses' heads—but on a sudden changed her mind; and going off apparently on some wild hallucination of her son's jealousy, she inquired, in so suspicious a manner, whether Mr. Behringbright himself was the authority for so dreadful a statement?—and if so, how he came to be in the confidence of a young woman to so shameful an extent, who ought to have died rather to keep her secret to herself?—that he felt compelled to inform her Miss Graham was the divulger of the mystery, and the sole confidante in question!—driven thereto by the headlong course events had entered upon, and the certainty of a more disastrous and heart-rending exposure that must otherwise ensue.

And yet, Mr. Behringbright declared, the Countess seemed as far as ever from being satisfied by this declaration.

"She always disliked you, dearest," he said, tenderly pressing Madeleine's hand. "From the first, her mind was the seat of all manner of ridiculous fancies and prejudices, only excusable on the ground of its total want of balance, and her long seclusion from the world and matters of fact and reality. And, besides, it is plain she still works upon her son's strange frenzy respecting my relations with Miss Maughan. In short, she insists on seeing you, and hearing from your own lips your reasons for the assertions I have made, on my perfect conviction that you have declared—most reluctantly declared—only the deplorable truth about poor Emily. Her ladyship is waiting below with great impatience, as the next train northward is about to start. But I would not allow her to fling herself unprepared upon you. Will you see her now?"

"Certainly," said Madeleine, looking so white and quivery that Mr.

Behringbright himself was disturbed and smitten with a slight feeling of distrust. "Only I suppose her ladyship will as little believe me, on my word, as any of the family seem to believe you, Mr. Behringbright! Is it not confirmation enough that Le Tellier has asked the young lady's hand of you? and that, although he had not the boldness to propose them to you, to me he has the most exacting and preposterous terms, as the conditions of his carrying out the overture?"

Mr. Behringbright shook his head. "For aught I know, they may fancy even *that* an invention of mine," he remarked, with an indignant though contemptuous smile. "Nay, the Countess plainly declared to me her son was so convinced of the omnipotence of cash in my case, that he would probably take it into his head I had *bought* a husband for my victim, in order to remove her creditably out of the path of my present alliance. For I think they do begin to believe, dearest, I am in earnest in my intention to marry you!"

"Let her ladyship come, then, and I will endeavour to satisfy her," said Madeleine, still much embarrassed; but a sudden thought occurred to her, and lighted up her brilliant eyes, though with a sparkle not certes caught from on high. "Let her come!" she added, in a firmer tone; "I think I shall be able to convince even a crazy woman like this Countess that I do not speak altogether at random and without proof."

Accordingly the Countess of Glengariff—whose haughty sense of social superiority was severely chafed by being obliged to await the pleasure of a young girl of the "commercial classes"—was summoned and escorted upstairs to an audience by Mr. Behringbright. Nor was she greatly mollified at being met at the top of the landing-place, as if by a contemporary princess, by Miss Graham. Indeed, her ladyship behaved almost rudely—pushed past Miss Graham without extending her hand, or acknowledging her presence otherwise than by a stern nod—and flinging herself, unasked, into a chair, turned all the haggard, aristocratic terrors of her visage on the party who was to submit to an examination.

Madeleine bore this gaze unblenchingly, though she did not like it, and respectfully declined the chair Mr. Behringbright drew for her. That gentleman then withdrew, to leave the ladies to an unreserved communication on the delicate subjects likely to form the discussion. He had previously stipulated that neither Nora nor Mr. Molloy, who were with the Countess, should form any part of the auditory.

For some moments after this departure, Lady Glengariff continued to stare as harshly and fixedly at Madeleine as before; who felt very uncomfortable under the scrutiny. But she rallied meanwhile. "After all," she said to herself, "this is only an old, withered madwoman, though she is called Countess of Glengariff, and is a great lady at Killarney! I am surely a match for her!"

And so the Countess found. Questioned, Miss Graham replied, with only so much quaver and hesitation as might naturally be expected in a

young lady of delicate sentiments, compelled to betray so sad a confidence on the part of a friend—but more circumstantially than she had deemed it necessary or advisable to Mr. Behringbright—with what she pathetically called “the whole miserable truth.”

Poor, dear, unhappy Emily had confessed it all to her dear friend and schoolfellow when they last parted in Belfast, in a burst of frantic grief, imploring her to second the application which Monsieur Le Tellier had with difficulty—now that he had attained his wicked ends—been induced to promise to make to her guardian! She had been obliged to confess all, on Madeleine's entreating her to allow her *time* to bring the matter about. For every day, in spite of the cleverest arts at concealment, increased the danger of a discovery of her shame! Her seducer himself had shown alarming symptoms of shrinking from his engagements, and would doubtless require a heavy bribe to keep him in adherence even to his own proposals. “Still Emily,” the undaunted girl continued, “did not confess the truth until she was driven to it by visible necessity; for she accidentally dropped a note which declared the state of affairs in a manner not to be mistaken, and which I myself as accidentally finding, felt bound to call upon her for explanation on.” And this note—Miss Graham now declared—she had still in her possession, and was willing to submit to her ladyship's judgment.

The Countess eagerly assented, and Madeleine withdrew, to seek out the document from among some other papers, she said, she had brought with her, to verify any statements she might find it necessary to make on the subject to Mr. Behringbright.

She took care to be absent, seeking for this voucher, ample time to allow of the departure of the mail train with her letter to her mother. She then returned with the first specimen of those epistles she had ordered Camille to address to her, under the name of Emily Maughan. This contained, as the reader may possibly remember, the statement of his intention to seek out Mr. Behringbright, and obtain his concurrence in their union. But I may have omitted to mention, that it was a letter which bore upon its every word most utter condemnation for the woman to whom it was written.

With knitted brows and severest aspect—an aspect Rhadamanthus or Minos might have thought not unbefitting the exercise of their own judicial duties—the Countess perused the whole epistle from beginning to end.

Madeleine confidentially expected judgment in favour of her veracity, as the result of this scrutiny. But, like some other very, very, very clever persons, she had overlooked a trifle of some importance to the general stability of her edifice.

“This letter would have been decisive but for one remarkable circumstance, which gives rise to a notion confirmatory of my son's opinion that some duplicity is at work in the transaction,” said the Countess, with a stern

clearness of deduction that showed she was thoroughly in one of her lucid intervals. "I have always understood, Miss Graham, that you did not know Mr. Behringbright *was* Mr. Behringbright, until he made to you the declaration of his intentions on the day of my son's accident. How, then, am I to suppose Miss Maughan implored your interposition with a man whose position with regard to her, and in the world in general, was unknown to you at the date of this intercepted letter?"

This was a fixer,—or would have been for most people. It did rather puzzle Madeleine Graham, but not much or long.

"Emily, of course, was acquainted with the true identity of Mr. *Behringbright*, under the name of *Brownjohn*; and perceiving the great kindness and affection he took for me at once, on his visits at my father's house, and knowing we were likely to meet again on the lakes—anticipating all, in reality, that has come to pass—she secured my interest with Mr. Behringbright in advance."

The Countess smiled—a strangely lurid and sarcastic smile.

"You are ready with your answer, Miss Graham," she said. "However, I am more than ever satisfied that my son's tormenting dreams are founded in actualities!—You look surprised, and perhaps you have a right to feel so. We Glengariffs are confessedly not the most sober-judging people in the world; and yet our inspirations serve us sometimes as well as the boasted sanity of judgment of other people. And now I declare to you, that unless you wish me to get you to repeat your explanation in the presence of Mr. Behringbright, you must allow me to retain possession of this letter until I can confront Emily with its evidence. She may reasonably refuse to be condemned, even on her *friend's* unsupported statements against her! But no impudence can explain away this fact, if it is a fact: and of course, if it is so, I am not the messenger to bring pollution of the kind to the death-bed of my noble son, even if Emily's refusal, and admission of her guilt in so doing, anticipates for him, by a brief period, the stroke of doom!"

Madeleine certainly made no objection to this impounding of the documents—on her own account—under the penalty announced. But, on behalf of her dear friend, she most warmly and generously pleaded that she really could not allow it; that it would kill her beloved Emily to be subjected to such an ordeal! The more she pleaded to the contrary, however, the more inexorable the Countess showed herself in her resolve.

"I have promised my son I will not look in his face again until I have seen Emily, and won her consent to the great ordeal proposed, if it be possible to attain it. It is not likely I shall succeed under these circumstances; I do not desire to succeed. But I must keep my promise to Lord Glengariff!—I must, I say! Armed with this document, I will go at once to Belfast, and, happen what may, will fulfil my word to my dying son!"

"The revelation will kill him. But have your own will, madam. You will have a long journey for nothing!" said Madeleine, spitefully.

"No; it is the *suspense*—the doubt—that torments him, which, much more than the fever of his wound, is wearing my son into his grave!" the Countess replied, with increased asperity. "And to show that I believe so, I will immediately write to him the full particulars of what I have thus far ascertained, that he may know the very worst. Mr. Behringbright will confirm to him, at all events, the fact of the Frenchman's arrival in Killarney, and proposal for Emily; I shall request him to do so. But do not fear, Miss Graham, that I will reveal to Mr. Behringbright, *at present*, anything that may casually shake his confidence in the disinterested and reciprocal quality of the affection you have inspired him with. This letter I retain as the price of my discretion."

Madeleine smiled scornfully, but was secretly much annoyed at her own oversight in what she had intended to prove so capital a manœuvre. However, she considered she had a remedy in store for all!

Meanwhile, she *had* effected one great object. Her letter—as there was no other but a special train now to be procured for the rest of the day from Killarney—would reach Belfast some time before the Countess. There was a good chance that Emily might be expelled and out of the way before Lady Glengariff's arrival. Her mother, she knew, made aware of a pressing exigency in the case, was a woman of energetic action when she pleased. But if even Emily was unhappily still on the spot, ready to make all the confusion in her power, there was no danger that could not be obviated if only Camille—Camille!—were removed from the possibility of adding his malicious or cowardly evidence to a discovery of the truth.

The postscript—the forged postscript—to Lady Glengariff's invitation to the fugitive governess to return, what did that matter? It *was* in her ladyship's handwriting. She was known to be proud to excess—to have always disapproved of her son's attachment—to be subject to intervals of insanity. She might deny the written words as much as she thought proper: opinion would go in favour of their authenticity. The great fact of Camille having asked Emily in marriage would always remain, and if meanwhile he died of some *sudden attack*—some disorder of the stomach (and he was subject to such)—all Emily's denial henceforth would stand for little. Attempts to save her own credit, when it was useless any longer to admit her errors, with a view to the best remaining remedy.

Still there was no time to be lost! And so, as soon as Mr. Behringbright set out to accompany Lady Glengariff, who had determined on a special train, to the railway-station—which he seemed to desire—Miss Graham resumed her own original plan, and proceeded on a drive to the Muckross Abbey Hotel.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A GRAND JUNCTION.

It is a beautiful drive, that, from Prospect Palace to Muckcross Abbey, along the skirts of Kenmare Woods, and the lovely inner bend of Castle Lough Bay. And it was a most delightful morning, the sky as clearly blue and lighted with the sun as if clouds and mists were unknown things on the lakes of Killarney, when Madeleine Graham emerged on her excursion. But Madeleine Graham was decidedly going to Muckcross Abbey on business, not on pleasure. She took scarcely any note of what she saw of the charms of nature, arrayed in the transparent gold cloth of the day-beam. I believe she was even hardly gratified when, arriving at the Muckcross Hotel, and stepping into its capacious hall, her distinguished appearance and beauty excited the attention of several groups of persons lounging and chatting with the affable hostess and her attendant barmaids. But Madeleine really did look very well, in her flowing morning dress, and with her coquettish plumed hat on, and her veil half flung back, revealing her earnest and excited physiognomy, rich in colour and character—though this last probably not exactly of the most attractive and femininely soft of possible aspects at the moment. A wandering harper, who was playing “The Last Rose of Summer” to all whom he could get to listen—like a minstrel of old—in the hall, seemed involuntarily to change the air as she came in to something a good deal wilder and more irregular, and defying in movement: as if he comprehended intuitively that the plaintive and the pathetic were not the style of melody to wheedle a reward out of this new-comer.

Madeleine, however, took no notice whatever of the bard or his minstrelsy. She inquired for a French lady staying at the hotel—a French lady who came the night before—Madame Loriôt, she believed. Madeleine did not know by what name her friend chose to be known on her present peregrination, but the description, she thought, would hit her. And so it did. “Oh yes, ma’am; a French lady—a play-actress, or something of that sort?—She’s only got a bedroom; didn’t want a sitting-room—leastways, not a private one. Who shall I say’s called?”

“Miss Graham—Miss Madeleine Graham, of Belfast.”

It was lucky, however, for Miss Madeleine Graham of Belfast’s chances of seeing her friend, that she determined to tread fast on the slatternly heels of the chambermaid who went to announce her. The abigail, knocking at a door on the third story labelled “Kate Mavourneen,” and delivering her message to an unseen interlocutrix within, who unlocked the door, but held it nearly closed in hand, received for reply, after a short pause of doubtful import, “*Miss Madeleine Graham!* But I know no such person in Killarney who does not know me in Belfast!”

"Oh yes, you do—you do, dear Olympe," said the applicant, pushing the door open almost by force, and entering. "That will do, young woman; Madame knows me; we will ring if we want anything.—And now, my best Olympe, do you not know me—your dear old pupil of yore, Madeleine Graham?" the young lady inquired, in the kindest and most familiar manner, and making as if she would throw her arms around her *ci-devant* friend and instructress of the Sparx Gymgynœcium.

But Mademoiselle Loriôt stepped back with a most theatrical air of dignity and repulse. "What are you? what do you mean?" she exclaimed. "I am me, it is true; but Madeleine Graham, I know her no longer! I do not desire to know her! Pardon me, my time is of importance, and I am engaged at present in the duties of my toilette!"

This latter statement was visibly correct, and a rather strange figure Mademoiselle Loriôt cut in the operation. It has been said that nothing more completely disenchant the eye of adoration than the sight of a human being, male or female, in its nightcap! But really the spectacle of a Frenchwoman, prematurely old with dissipation, before rouging and bewigging up for society, is something to disenchant one of humanity altogether. And such was Mademoiselle Loriôt's haggish and withered aspect as she stood in her majestic attitude of repulse, in a showy chintz dressing-gown, with naked feet, almost bald-headed, and looking the very incarnation of spite and ill temper at her blooming visitor, that I am sure it would have justified all mankind's turning hermit, and refusing thenceforth and for ever all society and resort with the fair sex.

"Oh yes, you do know me—you shall know me, dear Olympe, now that we are in a place where it is no longer necessary for me to conceal the great affection I have for you!" still Madeleine nobly persevered. "Killarney is not Belfast; people don't go about in iron stays here; and the moment I heard you had arrived on the lakes, I determined to call upon you, and remind you of old times, dear! And let us talk in French, too, and I will show you I have not forgotten anything you taught me!"

And she would have embraced Mademoiselle, but again Mademoiselle would not permit it; nay, she drew back with an air of heightened repugnance.

"Ah, then, I comprehend but too well what is otherwise inexplicable—Camille Le Tellier's appearance in Killarney!" she cried. "The *perfidé* pursues you always; and you have shamefully deceived me in pretending that this worthless heart is not made the victim of your treacherous attractions, but has transferred itself to another! Hold, Miss Graham! It is an indignity—an insult a thousand times repeated you offer me—when, not satisfied with your triumph, you seek to parade it before me, and to display in chains a captive whose appearance recalls to me the saddest and most degrading episode of my life."

"You are mistaken, Olympe! If you will but hear me, I will convince

you of your mistake. Meanwhile, do not let me interrupt your dressing: we used often to watch each other dress, you know, when we were at the Misses Sparx's humbug academy, and you taught me a good deal then in that way, and must know more yourself now!" wheedled Madeleine, seating herself, with an air of remaining, beside the chamber mirror, the table before which was largely strewed with cosmetics, rouge pots, pomades, enamel paste, violet powder balls, and aromatic essences, from the French-woman's open travelling case.

"But I repeat to you, this is an intrusion, Miss Graham! I no longer seek, I no longer desire, your society," resumed Mademoiselle Loriôt, with great vehemence. "And that you may believe so, I will tell you what it has occurred to me to ascertain! You forbade me your house; you repudiated my tenderness, and you assured me that the devotion of this *infâme* was transferred to another!—To a certain Miss Emily Maughan, become, through misfortune, a governess in your father's upstart family. Well, I remember that this Emily Maughan—once herself esteemed rich—had always, nevertheless, been of an amenity and kindness of disposition not to be surpassed. Some calumnies had been raised against her at the Sparx Gynécée, it is true, and, nevertheless, she had never made mischief there. It was you and I that made all the mischief there that was made! Witness that affair of the betrayal of the poor cook and her party in the kitchen, of which Miss Emily was always unconscious—which we had both, in a degree, shared—and yet divulged!

"I have compassion, I say, on this innocent young girl, when I hear she is likely, in her turn, to become the victim of the changeable caprices of a man without heart, without honour, without remorse—who sacrifices women, without scruple, to the demands of his self-love and gratification, wherever he encounters folly equal to his presumption! *You* had denied me the entrance of your father's house, no doubt; but Miss Maughan had not denied me her master's. I resolve to call upon her, and ascertain, if possible, the true position of affairs!—I do so. I am received with every sign of an amiable welcome, in spite of the visible traces of misfortune in my appearance—in spite of the signs of a secret and overwhelming chagrin which are imprinted on Miss Maughan's countenance, otherwise expressive of mildness and beneficence, restrained solely by the lack of means. But when, encouraged by the affability of my reception, my heart expands itself with an emotion of pity and tenderness towards this unhappy orphan, and I proceed to warn her, with a sorrowful earnestness, against the character and designs of a man—my countryman—who, I understand, pursues her with his addresses, which are not altogether unacceptable,—then her eyes flash fire; her whole physiognomy lights up with indignation, and she assures me, with expressions of a contempt and repudiation impossible to be feigned, that no calumny could exceed this in total want of foundation!

"I felt, then, that I had been deceived! And, penetrated in my turn

with a just aversion for so much falsehood and deception, Miss Graham," Mademoiselle continued, without softening the realities of things in their expression, it must be allowed, "in reply to Emily's demand, I declare to her my informant! Petrified, but at the same time violently irritated, she on her part no longer observes any reticence on the subject, as regarded you, but reveals to me—so far as she herself understood it, she assured me—the real state of the affairs. The pretensions of Camille to your alliance—legitimately exploded by your father and mother, but which she had but too much reason to believe you continued secretly to encourage!—Emily Maughan was too generous, too noble to hint—perhaps to apprehend—to what extent! But I know *you*—and I know him—and I know, therefore, better what to conclude! In brief, Miss Maughan, as well as myself, sees in your attempt to cast the blame upon her a frightful disingenuity and audacity which excite her alarm as well as indignation. You are absent, and are likely to continue so. Her situation, even before my revelations, had for some reason or other become extremely distasteful and irksome to her. She takes her resolution at once: complains to Miladi Graham, your mother, of the scandalous imputation attempted to be fastened on her, and gives in her own dismissal in the space of one month! Already this period has all but elapsed; and, probably, returned to England, Miss Maughan amply justifies her reputation from your insinuations, while you—you here, on these lakes—haunted by the shadow of Camille Le Tellier—offer proofs, no longer to be contested, of your real complicity and perfidy!"

After all, this was in some degree good news for Madeleine, though she did not relish the statement much as it went on. Emily might be already safely out of the way! Most probably she had left Ireland, if she had left Sir Orange Graham's family. She had little attraction to remain in that country, and it was most probable she would return to her native land and home.

Satisfied with this conclusion, Madeleine now endeavoured to turn aside the current of her friend's justly roused feelings.

"You have done me a great good then, Olympe, and I thank you; but you are wrong to take things in a manner so little intended by me! I wished to spare you pain. I endeavoured to mystify you a little, I confess; for your friendship was still very dear to me, and likely to become extremely useful, and I did not wish to forfeit it for the sake of so worthless a creature," she said, in her soft, cajoling accents. "Yet, it is true, Camille had been long in pursuit of me—animated chiefly, no doubt, by the mercenary motives you had warned me to expect only in him. I must admit even that, perhaps, I had blamably encouraged his pretensions—I mean, flirted a little with him—in a silly, unmeaning way, but which brought me into a great deal of trouble. Indeed, I cannot make out, at this hour, the extreme folly and inconsequence of my conduct—for my heart was in reality all along given to another. You will hardly believe

it," she continued, making a bold plunge into the credulity of her listener, "but from the moment I saw *that* Mr. Behringbright—you remember—at the French plays, I have not ceased to love and prefer him to all mankind!"

No: Mademoiselle Loriôt did not quite believe this; or if she did, she took a queer way of showing it. She burst into a peal of really hearty, genuine, unstagey laughter, that made her essence bottles jingle on the toilet-table. Of a truth, she laughed and laughed again; there seemed no end of her laughter! And in spite of the gravity she endeavoured to maintain, Madeleine could not altogether resist the contagion. Indeed, after a vain struggle and pause, she laughed too. Perhaps there was policy in the ebullition.

"Very well, Olympe," she resumed, when at last the Frenchwoman paused in sheer exhaustion, "have it your own way: believe or not, as you please, in the sincerity of the feelings I avow. But of this you may be certain,—your lessons have not quite been cast on the winds. I *have* secured this rich prize,—the wealthy Behringbright, at last—and have the means—or shortly shall have—in my power to reward my faithful friends; above all, to exhibit my affection for the beloved guide and friend of my youth—in a substantial form, if only I can avoid one great danger!"

Olympe listened now with gravity. She laughed no longer; she was all attention.

"You do not mean to say so!" she exclaimed. "So much good fortune and happiness cannot be in store for the unhappy Olympe, in the extreme and almost hopeless misery she is sunk to!"

Madeleine reiterated her assurance in a tangible manner. She displayed the costly diamonds on her finger.

"Look at the ring he has presented me on our betrothal!" she exclaimed, flourishing the glittering stones.

Olympe was somewhat of a connoisseur in jewels. She snatched up the fair hand, and carefully examined these.

"*Mon Dieu!*" she exclaimed, letting it fall with an exclamation of delight, after turning the facets in all lights. "No, I do not dream! And it is to me that this dear child hastens with the fortunate intelligence! Embrace me indeed, my beloved Madeleine! Forgive me if for a moment I doubted your tenderness. You marry the rich Behringbright, and you repudiate the perfidious Camille!—in his turn to taste all the misery, the despair, the undying vulture at the heart, of rejection! Come to my arms!"

Madeleine could perhaps have dispensed with this ceremony of reconciliation. But it was necessary to submit to it; even to seem to return it with warmth and enthusiasm.

"Well, and this dear Behringbright, where is he, since Camille is here?" Olympe inquired, at last releasing her restored pupil and friend

from an embrace which all the sweet essences on her toilette would not, perhaps, have rendered so fragrant as might have been desirable.

"He is at *Glengariff Castle*, on the other side of the lake," said Madeleine, with designed emphasis.

"Ah, *Glengarreef Castle*—where I am bound to go—where my dear friend shall now be my convoy—to thank the angel young nobleman who saved my life in Belfast, and, if possible, to interest him yet more in my misfortunes!" Olympe replied, with a new enthusiasm.

But Madeleine was forced to dissipate this hopeful project. She was not ill-pleased, indeed, to have Olympe placed in a complete dependence upon herself. So she explained to Mademoiselle that the young nobleman could see no one—that he was declared to be almost in a dying state, in consequence of a severe accident he had sustained on the previous day, on the water.

"And moreover, Olympe," she added, with a smile, "I warn you that all these coquettish preparations would be likely to prove in vain; for you really have the most formidable of rivals with his lordship in *Emily Maughan*! It was for her sake, I assure you, he conducted himself so strangely in Belfast; but he is as good as dead now, and there is no occasion to talk any more about him."

Perhaps Mademoiselle Lorient—warned by former experience—would not have believed much in what she heard. But she had already learned from people's talk that a terrible accident had taken place to some person of distinction on the previous day, and she admitted herself dolefully to be so unfortunate nothing could be likelier than that it had happened to the person whom she looked upon as her last friend and patron in the world!

"And I have scarcely enough money left to convey me starving to the back door of some theatre," she sighed, "where I must possibly content myself henceforth with the lowliest position—or accept a dangerous exaltation to the *tight rope*, which has been continually urged upon me by my managers, in spite of my conviction of the misfortunes that pursue me, and a sort of giddiness I have often experienced even in my evolutions on the solid ground."

"But you shall never know the want of money again, Olympe, if you will aid me to secure my own good fortune!" said Madeleine.

"What is wanting to it, my child, since this wealthy *blind man* has proposed to you?" Olympe replied, with now sufficient eagerness and interest.

"I have hinted to you there is still some danger of failure in the project. In fact, it is of no use attempting to conceal the facts from you. I must confide in you absolutely, even at some risk of provoking your displeasure, if you still retain a regard for the wicked coxcomb who has been the plague, I may say, of both our lives, dearest Olympe!" replied the young lady.

"You speak of Camille?" said Mademoiselle Lorient, with a deeply sentimental sigh.

"Exactly so. And now, to avow to you the whole truth," Madeleine resumed, with no feigned reluctance. "As I told you—as Emily told you—partly in fun and partly in folly—I amused myself, in short, to some reprehensible degree with the affected passion of your perfidious lover. I even answered some of his letters—a good many, I am afraid—and I dare say very much in the foolish style of those celebrated old yellow-backed novels of ours. And so now Camille has followed me here with a whole budget of such rubbish, and threatens me to produce them, and spoil all my chances of one of the greatest matches in the world, unless I give up Mr. Behringbright, and marry poverty, in his person!"

"Marry him!—marry Camille! But have you in reality inspired such a passion into that base soul, that he desires to marry a woman—for her *beauty* only?" exclaimed Olympe, with a bitter malignancy of feeling that did not add by its expression to the charm of her own visage.

Nevertheless, Madeleine thought it not amiss to encourage this exasperating delusion.

"If it be so, by so much the greater will your pleasure be to assist me in thwarting the designs of a man who has shown himself so insensible to all the claims of a just and so amply returned affection," she remarked.

"Very true; nothing can be truer, my child!" said Olympe, looking uglier and uglier every moment with malice. "You have, then, but to command me! Speak the word! What do you wish to be done?"

Madeleine explained, with an earnestness that left no doubt of her own convictions on the subject, that it was above all things necessary to retrieve from Camille's possession the letter she had mentioned.

"You know Mr. Behringbright's character of old, Olympe," she observed, obliged to awaken what was evidently a jarring reminiscence. "And I do not seek to deny to you that, for a man of so much prudery of ideas, and who has suffered so much from the volatility of other women, there might be a good deal that is fatally compromising for me in these letters. But, deprived of them, all that Camille can allege would sound but as the ravings of disappointed cupidity. I can defy him; and Mr. Behringbright would remain indifferent to whatever he might venture to allege. In short, if you can secure these documents for me, they shall become, on my marriage, worth to you a thousand pounds; and I will exert all the influence of my new position to restore you to a society you are formed to adorn!"

Olympe jerked her head in acknowledgment of the compliment; but she seemed only half pleased.

"*Ma foi!*" she said, gloomily; "but these letters must have in them something of an extremely disastrous nature, since you offer such a price for them! But I comprehend, perhaps! And you, perhaps, forget too much, Mademoiselle, that I also—I have once loved this man!"

Madeleine discerned a strong touch of jealous irritation in these words, and she put in a counter-infusion of equal acidity to rectify the draught.

"You may have loved him once; but surely not since you knew that it was he who pelted you with coarse vegetables from the Belfast stage!" she said.

"He! Camille! He threw the wreath of carrots at me! Do not say so. Let me die without the conviction of that last excess of injury and contempt!" the poor woman—for really she was to be pitied now—exclaimed, in genuine accents of grief and indignation, very different from her usual flighty, theatrical expressions of emotion.

But Madeleine was not to be deprecated. She assured her unfortunate friend that what she had stated was the simple fact; that Mr. Behring-bright, who never exaggerated or told a falsehood, had informed her that Camille was her unmanly assailant, whom he had with difficulty saved from the wrath of Lord Glengariff.

After all, Olympe was a human woman. The poor creature burst into a frantic passion of grief and indignation over the intelligence, which proved her decidedly to have some feelings of the kind.

Madeleine Graham, on her part, had sufficient command over her sense of the ridiculous to join very sympathizingly apparently in the overflow; and she found her own purpose well answered in the results. After a strong ebullition of this sort, Olympe, on a sudden, dried her tears and checked her sobs.

"Come," she said, "let us resume our fortitude! Let us be calm, let us be rational! Let us reflect only on the means of vengeance! What is it you demand of me? Behold me prepared to perish in the attainment of your object, since it also means vengeance on this traitor!"

Madeleine modestly declared she had every confidence in the abilities of her friend. What was wanted was simply to recover her letters from his custody. He had them in a portmanteau with him. He lodged at an obscure inn in a wood. The problem was to remove every shred of these documents from his power and possession.

"Ah, I remember *the inn*—the inn on the skirts of a forest!" Olympe exclaimed. But she remembered more. "*Ma foi!* there is a gleam of lightning for me over that inn and that forest! I see an *old woman* there who alights disguised in a thick veil, with a beautiful pair of gloves, and who speaks with the accent of an angel!—of a young angel! Madeleine, it is you!"

Madaleine perceived the vindictive flash in her friend's eye. But there was nothing for it but to reply,—

"It is true, Olympe! I was there to implore, almost on my knees, but in vain, the restoration of my letters!"

"You failed! Who, then, can succeed?"

"You can!—or rather we can succeed only in conjunction," said Madeleine. "I need an ally, in whom I can implicitly trust, and who will venture something on my behalf—and her own! I intend to invite Camille to a dinner, under pretence of settling our plans; and I will detain

him a sufficient interval while some one carries off the fatal secrets in his possession !”

“ But it is a robbery that is projected !”

“ Do not call things by such absurd names ! No ; I only desire to get back certain papers of which an unjust use is about to be made. The letters are, properly speaking, *mine*, since I penned them. Do you not comprehend ?”

“ Yes,” said Olympe, with a ghastly smile, “ I do comprehend ! Your wishes—your *motives*, even ! But the *means* ?”

“ I will tell you,” replied Madeleine ; “ I had formed the whole idea in my head as I came along. The people of the house where Camille lodges are very simple, unprejudiced people. It is almost an open house—any one can run in and out that chooses. While he is absent dining with my aunt and me, what can be easier than for you to go to this inn, and present yourself there as what you ought to be in reality, Olympe—as the wife of Monsieur Le Tellier—of the foreign gentleman who has a room in the upper floor of the ‘ Red Herring ’ ? You are a foreigner also—you look a lady—of the very age and figure to be what you pretend. Those simple Irish creatures will believe you. Then ask to be shown to your husband’s apartment to await his return. They will comply. Once there alone with his depositories, do not trouble yourself with false keys or picklocks. Take a good stout knife with you, and cut open the back of the portmanteau ; I have ascertained from an American, an acquaintance of Camille’s, that it is a leather one. Remove *all* the letters you can find ; and as it is now chilly weather enough for a foreigner, have a fire ready kindled in the bedroom, and fling one and all of these accursed documents into it ! I shall take care that you have time for the operation.”

“ What skill ! what rare ingenuity ! I recognize no longer my pupil, but my mistress !” exclaimed Olympe, somewhat ironically, as it appeared, for she continued, “ But this excellent work accomplished, who will be suspected of it and *punished for it* ?”

“ There is no punishment to be feared ; I will supply you with ample means for escape, not only from Killarney, but from Ireland.”

“ I should easily be overtaken. Do they not send the lightning after criminals now ?”

“ Well, then, remain, and defy him with a noble defence which will conciliate to you the admiration and enthusiasm of all who admire courage and resolution ! What need you care ? Avow to the world that there were letters compromising to *your* reputation in this man’s possession, which you felt called upon to destroy ! Every one will honour you to the skies for so doing. No jury will be found to convict you ! You will be the heroine of a noble act of self-assertion—the theme of second editions of the public papers. Every one, I say, will admire your daring and dexterity ! It is an age which disapproves nothing but failure !”

The raw and hitherto pallid cheek-bones of the untoiletted French-woman flushed with a brighter colour than her wonted rouge at the

suggestion. Yet she hesitated. She was too well convinced of the bad faith and selfishness of her proposed principal to place too much stress on Miss Graham's assurances,—and so she reflected to herself that only a part of this programme ought to be followed out. It would be necessary for her own security to retain the letters intact! With these letters in her possession, she should indeed be mistress of the situation. Madeleine would be *compelled* to keep whatever she might promise. And she was the more confirmed in her convictions of the valuable nature of the property in question by Madeleine's assent to a most heavy condition she proceeded to lay on her co-operation.

"For the hazard of the situation I am content! But I must have some pledge for the performance of your part, Madeleine, when once I have destroyed this evidence! Will you place that gorgeous ring in my possession until you redeem it at the price of a thousand pounds?" she said.

Even to this demand Madeleine, who felt she had no right to expect to be believed on her simple word, agreed.

"Mr. Behringbright will miss it from my hand, but I can readily devise some excuse; and as he values it so much, he will not grudge a thousand pounds for its restoration! Take it, Olympe," she said, drawing the splendid bauble from her finger, and placing it in the eagerly outstretched claw of Olympe. But she said to herself at the same time, "If the old vulture plays me false, I shall know where to send the police for my ring!"

The compact was now made, and Madeleine endeavoured to clench it yet more firmly on the other side.

"Ah, who knows, dear Olympe," she said, "but that this ring is the pledge of a second betrothal? For when Camille shall find his pretensions to me finally dissipated, who shall say that he will not return to his first love? You know the whole world turns upon itself!—especially as you will then have a good deal of money, and every imaginable influence with the wife of the wealthy Behringbright!"

Olympe's yellow-green eyes shone up again at this suggestion. "*Mon Dieu!* if I thought it possible!" she exclaimed; "if I did not think you mocked me!" And tears of sensibility—as she herself deemed them—overflowed those orbs.

Madeleine did mock her, in very truth—oh, most fearfully, most horribly mocked her! But you would not have dreamed so from her reply—nor did Olympe.

"No, dear Lorient, I am quite in earnest. I am indeed all but certain he loved you once—he reverts with so much indignation always to your conduct; and nobody ever hates so vehemently unless they have first loved the object! Only you must furbish up your charms a little, certainly! The hard life you have led has rather injured your good looks—your complexion especially, though that never was the best part of you. But you might easily, if you chose, have as good a one as mine!"

"As yours, beautiful child? Impossible! It is the product of your humid climate alone!" said Olympe, looking with a mixture of envy and admiration at her young friend.

"Not at all. Don't you remember how freckled my face used to be, at the Misses Sparx's?" replied Madeleine.

"I do indeed remember—some slight sun-touches—like the crimson roughness of the peach! And it is true they are all disappeared at present."

"I used means—and so may you—such a splendid cosmetic!"

"Means! Ah, what means?"

"Don't you remember what we once read at school—about *arsenic*, you know? Well, I use it as a lotion, and you may see the result in the improvement of my complexion."

"You do not mean that? That lecture made a great impression on my mind at the time, but the discreet application escaped me. I dreaded so powerful an agency, and mistrusted the philosophic teaching. But if you have really applied the drug without mischief—ah, lend me a sufficient infusion!" exclaimed Mademoiselle.

"I have none by me at present, in Killarney," replied Madeleine; "but arsenic is to be sold everywhere—under certain conditions. You remember what Miss Rosabella said about the necessity of having two witnesses to the purchase? But if we went both together into the town, I dare say we could get as much as we want—if we could invent any good reason. Of course, we don't wish people to know we are so anxious about our beauty as to buy *arsenic* to refresh it! It is used in dyeing, I believe—particularly green—and that green crape shawl of yours, dear, looks as if it wanted touching up. You yourself look like a person who knows all sorts of clever knickknackeries of the kind—and to make a *bright* green, such as would be proper for the shawl, they would let us have it without the black stuff in it, which is very unpleasant in using the wash. Come, if you have nothing else to do, we will take a lounge into Killarney—buy the stuff, which I will divide into proper weights for you, and keep half—and we can have lunch at some nice place, and talk over old times."

Irresistibly seduced by the prospect of removing what she could not but discern at the moment in her looking-glass was a blemishing sallowness in her complexion, Mademoiselle Lorient readily assented, and the two friends shortly after arrived in Killarney, in company, in Madeleine's car.





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